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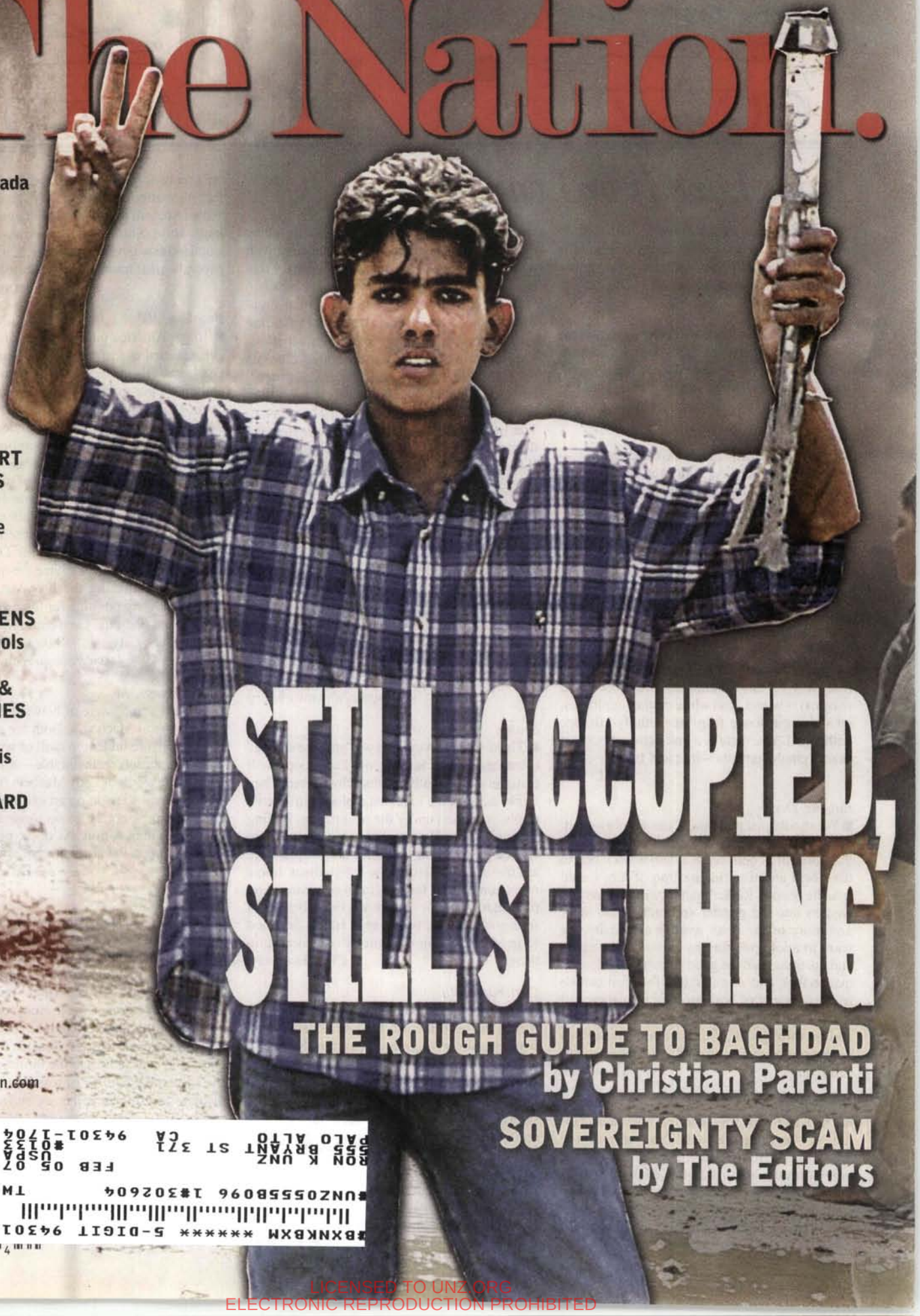

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David Cole

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Tony Judt

STILL OCCUPIED, STILL SEETHING

THE ROUGH GUIDE TO BAGHDAD
by Christian Parenti

SOVEREIGNTY SCAM
by The Editors

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Iraq, Love It or Leave It

We invited readers to respond to our May 24 forum, edited by Scott Sherman, of eleven writers discussing "How to Get Out of Iraq." Below is a sample of your thoughts. —The Editors

San Francisco

■ Leave it to *The Nation* to offer such a compelling series of articles! Let's hope your forum is indeed a beginning toward a necessary end in Iraq. Clearly, the exit strategy for Iraq should be a combination of all these ideas. SALLY PIÑA

New Paltz, NY

■ Our best academic minds have had their say—most persuasively. As I am not an academic (but an artist and an old Zionist), my suggestion on how to get out of Iraq may seem simple, even simple-minded: We were bullied into this fiasco of a war—not only a quagmire but a trap of this mindless Administration's making. So, let us get out—not sometime in some distant future, but now. Let's admit our mistake, apologize and pay compensation to the victims. What might follow in Iraq? Quite probably turmoil and even civil war. But nations have survived turmoil and civil wars. "Staying the course" (basically, for this Administration's geopolitical reasons) is worse. And while cutting our losses, let's also cut loose from our unholy alliance with Israel. Yes, there is a link between our two deadly entanglements—Iraq and Israel.

SI LEWEN

Eugene, Ore.

■ We should just pull out. It's as simple as that. We should say we have done all that we could, that some of us believed Saddam was a threat to the world and that ridding Iraq of him would free the people. Rather than feed more men and women into the grinder and rather than incur any more of the Arab world's animosity, we want to apologize for any mistakes we made and go. Spain had the good sense not to play the macho fool, and we could too if we had mature leaders instead of boys steeped in playground ideas. Let's not revisit the mistakes of Vietnam and go through 58,000 more American lives before someone has the guts and intelligence to call it quits. FRED MANNHEIM

Hickory, NC

■ The way out of Iraq is to leave without winning or slamming the door. This requires more than Donald Rumsfeld thinking outside the box—turn the box inside out. Make US withdrawal market-driven. First, cancel all the sweetheart development deals awarded to US contractors. Place a UN commission in charge of a realistic development schedule, monitored by the Agency for International Development with tight Congressional oversight. The primary rule is that Iraqis get first crack at new contracts.

Second, start funding development at a reasonable incentive level. Development funding then tapers down on a predetermined schedule. The Iraqis will know the economic clock is ticking. Third, draw down US troops in proportion to development funding. For each billion dollars in funding, 5,000 US troops head home. The Iraqis should see that the goal is to make themselves both sovereign and self-sufficient. If the Iraqis blow it, it will be largely their own fault. That's democracy. DANIEL ARRASMITH

Hartwick, NY

■ You published many excellent pieces about how to get out of Iraq. The only problem was, not one of the articles was by an Iraqi. Part of the mistake of going into this war was that it was not clear what the Iraqi people actually wanted. Now, as we search for a way out of Iraq, we need to look to articles, polls, websites, interviews, weblogs and quotes—from the Iraqi people.

BENJAMIN DANGL
www.upsidedownworld.org

Seattle

■ Those who demand that we "stay the course" often argue that pulling out the troops will result in a bloodbath and anarchy in Iraq. They fail to address the idea that a bloodbath is currently occurring under the occupation. Pulling US troops out of Iraq will only save lives. There will be no peace in Iraq until the people there are free from US corporate colonialism: Iraqis must control the fate of Iraq's economy. Any plan that does not shut down the schemes of foreign corporate takeover in Iraq is destined to produce an ongoing guerrilla insurrection there. CLIFF FRENSLEY

Carlsbad, Calif.

■ As a member of the Armed Forces, I believe it is in the best interest, both strategically and from a military-preparedness standpoint, to withdraw. "Staying the course" dangerously stretches our military. Doing so without putting enough troops into the area, to insure the safety of our forces and Iraqi civilians, borders on the criminally negligent. But how can Bush pull out yet still be politically potent? Do we have to wait until a regime change of our own? I know there is no great love for our Commander in Chief at your magazine, but I still wish we could put our animosity aside and work together on a realistic way for Bush to save face. Else I fear no matter how eloquently the case is presented, we will not begin withdrawal for a very long while. Soldiers will continue to die, be wounded at worrying rates and suffer continuing psychological trauma over wasteful months.

FRANCIS VRABEL

Brooklyn, NY

■ To get America out of Iraq, we first have to get America out of George W. Bush's hands. For years, this election will be seen as a referendum on pre-emptive, unnecessary war. We cannot lose this. But we must remain an independent voice and an independent organizing forum distinct from the Democrats. Kerry will not pull us out of Iraq unless we pull him to do so. We must also be wary of sectarianism. We can debate but cannot become divided over Kucinich, Nader, the United Nations, etc., not when the stakes are so high. Furthermore, there is an urgent need to build our Out of Iraq movement now while we have the momentum. This means forming the broadest and most vibrant showing possible for the protests at the Republican National Convention this summer in New York City. BRANDON JOHNSON
www.counterconvention.org

Silver Spring, Md.

■ I have become aware of how similar Dubya's character is to Macbeth's. Both are usurpers of power, both are under the spell of witches, both believe themselves invincible—and both are mad. In the words of Lady Macbeth (from which we may draw a lesson on an exit from Iraq): "I pray you, speak not, he grows worse and worse./ Question enrages him. At once, good night./ Stand not upon the order of your going,/But go at once." LEO B. ORBACH

Boston

■ Those perched above the clouds in the White House may be in denial, but the "F" word is heard more and more in Washington these days. Barring a miraculous consolidation of power by Prime Minister Iyad Allawi and his new Baghdad government, the present course seems headed into the jaws of failure. The bold new thinking necessary to avert disaster, as suggested by several contributors to the forum, is unlikely.

There are a number of reasons to doubt that the new government will enjoy sufficient moral authority to guide Iraq toward UN-supervised elections by year's end, not least the demonstrated US intolerance of Iraqi officials unwilling to toe the line. Lakhdar Brahimi has become little more than a multilateral stage prop. The transitional government led by Allawi will find

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EDITORIAL

Mission Accomplished II?

With furtive haste, former Coalition Provisional Authority administrator Paul Bremer declared the end of the US occupation at a virtually secret ceremony and bolted for the door, enclosed in the same bubble of isolated arrogance in which he arrived. The surprise event was calculated to avoid disruption by insurgents, whose armed campaign rages unchecked. News stories mentioned the Iraqi flag snapping in the breeze, but there was nothing about lowering the US flag. Far from ending, the occupation has merely entered a new phase.

Bremer left behind an "interim" government: a US-run operation with an Iraqi face, 140,000 US troops, $15 billion of withheld reconstruction funds with which the new US ambassador can quietly rule from the Green Zone, and a basket of edicts.

The interim government represents a step toward Iraqi self-rule. But can a body with such limited power lead the transition to free and fair elections? *Will* it? Can it improve the welfare of Iraqis in need of the basics of life while it countenances an occupying force that continues to provoke a violent response?

The hundred-plus US-crafted edicts cover everything from Iraq's legal code to its elections. Among other things, Bremer empowered an appointed electoral commission to "eliminate political parties or candidates" it disapproves of. (Juan Cole, a specialist on Shiite politics, likened the power of the commission to that of Iranian mullahs who routinely disqualify candidates they dislike.) Another decree bars political parties with militias, which would eliminate almost all traditional Iraqi parties. Another bans "hate speech" and advocacy of terrorism—a too-vague license to censor or disqualify candidates. Bremer also extended Order 17, granting US and other foreign civilian contractors immunity from Iraqi law, which outraged many Iraqis because it allows foreigners impunity even after the formal end of the occupation. Bremer bestowed on Iraqi cronies five-year appointments to such important government positions as head of intelligence and head of national security. He extended economic regulations that do everything from limiting taxation of foreign corporations to permitting full foreign ownership of Iraqi companies.

The handover, rather than being orchestrated to make the Bush Administration look as though it's making "progress" in an election year or to embed a US presence in Iraq indefinitely, should instead be an attempt to restore decision-making to the Iraqi people and to begin the process of US disengagement.

The costs of war and occupation have been steep. As a new report by the Institute for Policy Studies tabulates, some 11,000 Iraqi civilians have been killed and 40,000 injured in the fighting as of June 16; meanwhile, crime in Iraq continues to increase, oil production has dropped and unemployment has soared to 60 percent. The price to the American people includes almost 900 troops killed and more than $125 billion already spent. This toll will continue to mount. While the Administration may claim that US troops must remain in place to safeguard the fledgling Iraqi government, there can be no real security as long as the occupation continues.

America can't right all the wrongs it committed in this war—from invading a country without cause to rewriting its legal and economic code to suit US interests. But it could make a beginning by restoring full sovereignty, setting a date for withdrawal of US forces, disavowing plans to retain control of Iraq's economy and reallocating the billions appropriated for reconstruction to international agencies and an independent Iraqi government. Only such a government—one not manipulated by the US embassy—should determine the country's future. Until then, the "handover" of power will remain a sham.

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COMMENT

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No Blank Check

"A state of war is not a blank check for the President." The Bush Administration's claims "would turn our system of checks and balances on its head." "If civil rights are to be curtailed during wartime, it must be done openly and democratically, as the Constitution requires, rather than by silent erosion." *Nation* readers have heard these kinds of things before—from me, the *Nation*'s editors, the ACLU and other usual suspects. But before now, not from Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, author of the first two quotes. And certainly not from Justice Antonin Scalia, author of the third.

These judicial soundbites only begin to suggest the magnitude of the loss the Bush Administration sustained in a pair of historic Supreme Court decisions, issued June 28, on its asserted power to detain "enemy combatants." In the case that received the most complete treatment of the issues, that of US citizen Yaser Hamdi, the Bush Administration was able to persuade only a single Justice—Clarence Thomas—to adopt its position. And the passion of the decisions suggests that the Justices may well have been responding not only to the detention cases before them but also to the Justice Department's August 2002 "torture memo," which argued—along lines that eerily echo the government's argument in the detention cases—that the President in wartime is above the law. As the Supreme Court has now formally reminded the Administration, it's President Bush, not King George.

The extent of the Administration's loss is brought into relief by comparison with earlier Supreme Court decisions in wartime. The Court has historically bent over backward in deference to claims of national security, upholding the incarceration of more than 1,000 people for antiwar speech during World War I, and the detention of 120,000 Japanese and Japanese-Americans on the basis of race during World War II. The last time the Court confronted the claims of "enemy combatants," during World War II, it refused foreign nationals incarcerated abroad any access to the courts, and upheld without opinion death penalties imposed in a secret trial on several would-be saboteurs captured here, writing its opinion only after the defendants had been executed.

This time, the Court pointedly refused to defer to the Administration during wartime. It ruled that foreign nationals held at Guantánamo have a right to file habeas corpus petitions in federal court to challenge the legality of their detentions. And in Hamdi's case, it established that US citizens are entitled at a minimum to a fair hearing on whether they are "enemy combatants" before they can be held for a sustained period. The Court ducked the third case—that of José Padilla, a US citizen arrested at O'Hare airport—on jurisdictional grounds; his lawyers filed their challenge in the wrong court. But it is clear that when he refiles in the correct court, Padilla will be entitled to at least as much as Hamdi, and perhaps more.

The rulings do not mean that the detainees will necessarily be released anytime soon. The Court rejected, for example, the broadest challenge to the detention of US citizens. In the Hamdi case, a majority ruled that Congress's authorization of the use of military force against Al Qaeda and those who harbor them

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permits the executive to hold in military custody even US citizens who are fighting for the enemy against us.

But the rulings do make it likely that all the detainees will get some sort of hearing to assess their status. In Hamdi's case, the Court specified what process was due: notice of the charges and an opportunity to contest them before an impartial adjudicator. The Court did not reach the question of what process the Guantánamo detainees are due, because the only question before it was whether the detainees could even file a case in federal court. But there will be tremendous pressure now to give them what the Geneva Conventions require: a hearing before a military commission to determine their status.

The broader significance of the rulings lies in their ringing rejection of the argument that to defeat terrorism, the executive must have unfettered discretion. Since September 11, the Administration has repeatedly insisted that citizens (and indeed the world) should just "trust us." George W. Bush has done more than perhaps anyone to demonstrate the poverty of that theory. We've been asked to trust him about weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, torture of detainees, the designation of enemy combatants, alleged relationships between Al Qaeda and Iraq, and the privacy and liberty of American citizens. With any luck, the Supreme Court's message—that we trust checks and balances, not imperial presidents—will be heard far and wide. DAVID COLE

David Cole (cole@law.georgetown.edu), The Nation's *legal affairs correspondent, is the author of* Enemy Aliens: Double Standards and Constitutional Freedoms in the War on Terrorism.

Nader Loses the Greens

ELECTION MATTERS

The striking distinction between the Green Party's national gathering in late June and the Democratic and Republican national conventions, which will come later this summer, was the element of suspense. Close to 800 Green delegates arrived in Milwaukee united on basic issues—opposition to the war in Iraq and corporate hegemony, enthusiasm for organic standards, mass transit and instant-runoff voting—but uncertain about who would carry the party's national banner into the fall election season. In a sense, this was the convention where Greens had to decide what they wanted to be when they grew up. To the surprise even of some party leaders, they opted for a nuanced approach that, in the words of veteran party activist Medea Benjamin, promises to "help defeat Bush and grow the Greens."

Faced with a choice between nominating one of their own, anti-corporate activist David Cobb, and endorsing Ralph Nader, the party's 1996 and 2000 candidate who this year is running as an independent, Greens had to sort through a dizzying array of electoral and emotional options. By endorsing Nader, they would maintain a difficult relationship between the party and a non-Green but high-profile contender who Democrats say spoiled their chances in the 2000 presidential race, and who continues to send mixed signals about how he will conduct himself. With Cobb, they were offered a savvy party veteran who promised to use his campaign to build Green strength at the grassroots while maintaining a "safe states" strategy that, though critical of both George W. Bush and John Kerry, would avoid targeting states where a strong Green showing might tip the balance to Bush. After disregarding the Greens during much of this year's campaign, Nader and his followers within the party made a late bid for an endorsement that would have provided access to many of the party's twenty-three ballot lines and to its substantial volunteer base. Nader selected a prominent Green, former California gubernatorial candidate Peter Camejo, as his vice presidential running mate and then phoned in an "appearance" to a "Run Ralph Run" rally on the eve of the vote. But in the second round of balloting, delegates—some supporters of the "safe states" strategy, but other party purists who wanted to nominate one of their own—gave Cobb the nomination.

Cobb, who has developed over months of campaigning into an agile contender, was gracious in victory, announcing, "Ralph, if you are watching, thank you for what you have done, and thank you for what you will continue to do." Nader responded by dismissing the Greens as "strange" and calling the convention a "cabal." But the rejection will hurt. After a week that included a disastrous meeting with members of the Congressional Black Caucus—during which California Representative Barbara Lee told him, "A vote for Ralph Nader is really a vote for George Bush"—the consumer advocate needed the Greens more than ever. Many Green activists say Nader could have secured their support with relative ease if he had treated the party with respect—by seeking its nomination rather than an endorsement, by showing up in Milwaukee and by offering a clearer sense of how he hopes to run his campaign. But in the words of one of the party's elder statesmen, Maine's John Rensenbrink, Nader "blew it."

Though Nader continues to poll at 5 or 6 percent in some national and battleground state surveys—often tipping the balance in Bush's favor—he is having trouble securing ballot lines; the latest failure was Indiana, and even with the help of conservative groups, he is still struggling to get on in Oregon. Ultimately, Nader's name will make it on a number of state ballots—including those of battleground states like Florida, where he's been offered the Reform Party line. But without the Greens, it is hard to see how

SUMMERTIME: With this issue we begin biweekly publication. We'll resume our weekly schedule in September.

* * *

ON THE WEB: Despite the contrary opinion of virtually the entire scientific community, Doug Ireland reports, the Bush Administration wants AIDS-fighting organizations to tell people: Condoms don't work. Law professor Herman Schwartz analyzes the chances of curing one of our ailing democracy's worst diseases, partisan gerrymandering, and concludes, "Like so much else, it depends on the upcoming election." Bruce Shapiro reports on how Chief Justice William Rehnquist's rationale for Nixon's invasion of Cambodia has been used to justify torture (www.thenation.com).

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COMMENT

he will get on anywhere near the forty-four lines he was on in 2000, and that will cost him not just votes but credibility as a national contender. For instance, in California, where Nader will not have the Green ballot line, an independent candidate must gather a daunting 150,000 signatures. It's likely that Nader will come to regret losing the backing of the Greens. On the other hand, many Greens appear to be satisfied with their new course, and their new candidate. "We've broken our addiction to Nader," Benjamin, a founder of the antiwar group Code Pink, says of the Greens. "We've recognized that we can build the party at the grassroots while remaining on the same page with our progressive allies when it comes to beating Bush." JOHN NICHOLS

A No to Media Monopoly

Media monopolists were dealt a rare setback when the Philadelphia-based US Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit blocked implementation of last year's decision by the Federal Communications Commission to loosen media-ownership rules at the local and national levels. Even Rupert Murdoch's NewsCorp, owner of the Fox channels, the *Weekly Standard*, the *New York Post* and other media properties, was forced to announce that "plans for expansion will be put on hold." It wasn't supposed to be this way with a White House and Congress controlled by Republicans, who are major recipients of campaign contributions from big-media interests. But two years of organizing by consumer, church and labor groups opposed to the rule changes and smart legal strategies by the Prometheus Radio Project—which sued the FCC—and the Media Access Project have blocked moves that, among other things, would have allowed one company to own the daily newspaper, up to three television stations, up to eight radio stations and other media all in the same market.

It's a battle won but certainly not the war. The industry-friendly FCC majority will go back to work trying to fashion a rationale for loosening the rules, and even if they fail, the Court's ruling only locks in the media system that was in place on June 2, 2003—hardly a halcyon moment. "The commission needs to reverse course and start protecting the people's interest and the people's airwaves," says dissident FCC commissioner Michael Copps, who is touring the country this summer holding town hall meetings highlighting the threat to democratic discourse and cultural diversity posed by consolidation of media ownership. For a real reversal of course to occur, however, Copps and the five-member commission's other dissident, Jonathan Adelstein, need an ally who can tip the balance in a public-interest direction. That's unlikely to happen if George W. Bush wins in November, but it might if John Kerry wins—though Kerry needs a push to get more serious about media reform.

The real leadership could come from Congress, where a growing number of members, led by North Dakota Senator Byron Dorgan and House members such as New York's Maurice Hinchey and Vermont's Bernie Sanders, are working to turn the bipartisan coalition that opposed the FCC rule changes into a legislative force that will restore public-interest protections and ownership caps undermined or eliminated by the Telecommunications Act of 1996 and other Congressional and FCC misdeeds. "The court decision is step one," says Sanders. "The American people, however, will not be satisfied until Congress has totally ended the very dangerous idea of allowing more media consolidation. Now it is time for Congress to become pro-active and to fight for legislation which will allow for more localism, more diversity of opinion and more competition in the media." JOHN NICHOLS

CALVIN TRILLIN

On the Prime-Time Schedule for the Republican National Convention

The wacko right has mostly just disdain
For Schwarzenegger, Rudy and McCain.
But they'll be featured at the prime-time mike
As just the sort of folks swing voters like.
The wackos then emerge from yonder ditch.
Consumer bureaus call this bait-and-switch.

SweatX Closes Up Shop

The pilot manufacturing factory for SweatX, the noble anti-sweatshop brand that aspired to prove that fully unionized and even worker-owned garment factories can thrive in a sea of sweatshops, quietly closed its doors in May. The small Los Angeles plant, launched by the Hot Fudge venture capital fund run by Ben Cohen (co-founder of Ben & Jerry's), had struggled during its two years of operation.

"The reason why the thing failed," explains Cohen, "was some pretty serious mismanagement." Still, Cohen remains enthusiastic. "We discovered that it certainly is possible to cut and sew clothing in this country, pay workers a livable wage and decent benefits under good working conditions and still put out a product that is competitively priced."

The basic concept was simple: Hire experienced, motivated garment workers (hardly a problem in Los Angeles, where 120,000 workers toil in thousands of tiny factories that routinely violate federal minimum-wage, health and safety laws), install them in a new plant, pay them a living wage with full health benefits, sign them up with UNITE (the garment workers' union) and educate them in the virtues of cooperative ownership. Once the plant was up and running, the operation would be sold to its workers and managers, who would run it together. And once it had reached its initial market of socially aware consumers, liberal churches, unions, environmental and other social justice groups who would buy large wholesale orders for their organizations, it

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THE GREEN CROSS

OPTIMIST

Optimism is not the inability to recognise dangerous or negative trends. It is the belief that the world can be changed for the better, and the will to influence world processes. It is a commitment to human development and the preservation of the world's resources for future generations.

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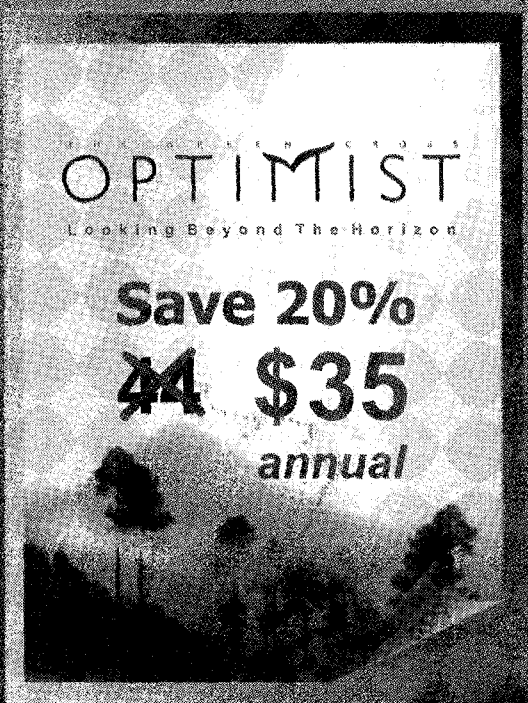

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COMMENT

would branch out into mainstream department stores and retail outlets. The SweatX label would eventually become the socially conscious counterpart to Nike's swoosh.

SweatX's proponents believed it would provide a model that would give anti-sweatshop activists evidence to push major labels like Gap and Nike—whose products are made primarily in Asian and Latin American sweatshops—to raise their workplace standards. As Los Angeles mayor James Hahn said at the factory's well-publicized opening in April 2002, "Your decision to locate the factory [in LA] is going to change the world."

At the time, that claim did not seem far-fetched. Labor costs are only 6 percent of the retail price of garments made in the United States—60 cents for a $10 T-shirt. The increased cost required to compensate workers decently would hardly matter when consumers realized that they had an alternative to buying clothing made in sweatshops.

Unfortunately, SweatX suffered the same fate as many start-up apparel companies. Its problems included uneven quality, insufficient capacity and missed delivery deadlines. Cohen and his advisers installed an initial management team that lacked experience in the highly competitive garment industry. They leased an expensive building and purchased too much equipment. Too many managers added to costs, despite a "solidarity ratio" that limited them to earning no more than eight times what a worker earned.

In its two years of operation, the major customers for SweatX's T-shirts and polo shirts were unions, a few colleges that, under pressure from student activists, created "sweat-free zones" in campus bookstores and rock bands like the Grammy-winning Foo Fighters, who sold SweatX shirts at their concerts. But SweatX never penetrated the largest universities, social justice groups or religious organizations. The SweatX management team learned too late that it could not profitably sell its products directly from the factory to individual customers or even large nonprofit organizations. The clothing market is dominated by a layer of large intermediary supply houses from whose catalogues nonprofit organizations, silk-screeners and many chain stores purchase their inventory. SweatX was negotiating with one such supplier when it ran out of cash. "They were learning on the job," says Cristina Vázquez, UNITE's western regional director.

By the time it had assembled an appropriately experienced management team—its fifth (and last) CEO was Rick Roth, who runs Mirror Image, a successful, and unionized, silk-screen printing company—it was too late. "The candy store failed because it was run poorly," says Roth, "not because customers don't like candy."

There is, in fact, a growing market for clothing and other goods made to satisfy consumers' social conscience. Global Exchange, a Bay Area–based human rights group, has opened three "fair trade" stores that sell clothing, crafts, house fixtures, chocolate, tea and coffee made by worker-owned cooperatives and firms that pay fair wages in various countries. Last year these retail outlets, along with its online business, had revenues of $1.2 million. Its No Sweat brand sneakers—produced by union workers and found on a website of union-made apparel called No Sweat (www.nosweatapparel.com)—are one of its bestselling items. Starbucks, Peet's and Millstone are marketing a fair-trade coffee blend produced by worker cooperatives and certified by TransFair USA (www.transfairusa.org), a nonprofit monitoring agency. Across the country, consumers buy Newman's Own salad dressings and other foods, Patagonia clothing and Body Shop skin- and hair-care products because of their reputation as socially conscious companies.

Reputations don't always conform to reality. For example, American Apparel—which employs more than 1,000 workers in its LA T-shirt factory—aggressively promotes itself as a socially responsible "sweatshop free" employer. But last year, when its workers waged a union organizing campaign, the company initiated such a vicious intimidation effort that the National Labor Relations Board required it to sign a settlement agreement to refrain from antiunion practices in the future. And, as the *Wall Street Journal* noted recently, some retailers put big markups on their fair-trade products, which benefits them, not the producers.

SweatX's proponents argue that only an independent, democratic labor union can guarantee that a sewing factory is sweat-free, whether in the United States or overseas. But consumers need a way to verify that clothing is made under sweat-free conditions. Various groups, like the Worker Rights Consortium (www.workersrights.org), now play that role. Three years ago, for example, the WRC helped pressure Nike to require Kukdong, one of its huge contractors in Mexico, to allow workers to form an independent union.

Most of SweatX's thirty-five production workers have found other jobs, typically with harsher conditions and lower pay. But the company's most recent management team wants to keep the label alive under a new, presumably wiser, company. They hope to convince some of the remaining union clothing factories around the United States to produce items under the SweatX label. SweatX would focus on the marketing and sales side of the business, which these mostly small-scale operations can't afford, and give union-made clothing much greater visibility.

SweatX could also link with human rights and labor groups like United Students Against Sweatshops (www.studentsagainstsweatshops.org) and the National Labor Committee (www.nlcnet.org), which have spent the past decade exposing sweatshop abuses and supporting workers' struggles to unionize around the world. SweatX could help create a US market for union goods made in poor countries by selling them under a highly visible brand name that can compete with Nike, Gap and others. For example, a union shop in El Salvador, Just Garments, had expressed interest in becoming a partner of SweatX just before the factory closed.

"I have no regrets," says Alfredo Guerra, a 40-year-old cutter from Guatemala who was one of SweatX's first production workers. "We know what went wrong. We know what to do differently. I think we could make it succeed."

RICHARD APPELBAUM AND PETER DREIER

Richard Appelbaum, co-author of Behind the Label: Inequality in the Los Angeles Apparel Industry, *teaches sociology and global and international studies at the University of California, Santa Barbara. Peter Dreier, co-author of* The Next LA: The Struggle for a Livable City, *teaches politics at Occidental College in Los Angeles.*

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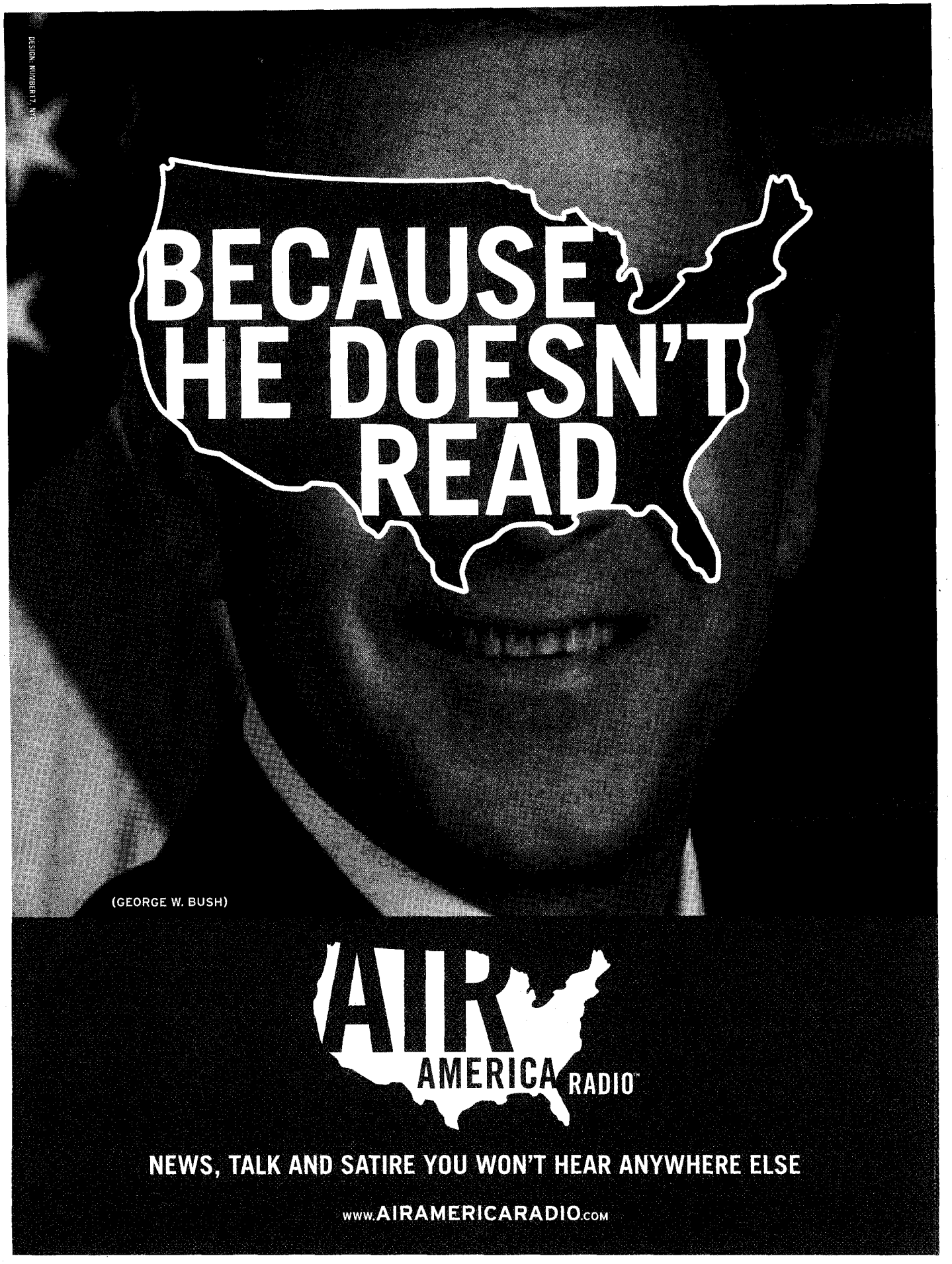

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COMMENT

True Patriotism

The Fourth of July is traditionally a time for reading the Declaration of Independence and listening to patriotic speeches. But the nation's birthday has also been the occasion for eloquent indictments of a country whose actual practices all too frequently contradict its professed ideals. At an Independence Day meeting sponsored by the Rochester Ladies' Anti-Slavery Society in 1852, the former slave Frederick Douglass delivered one of the nineteenth century's greatest orations. His theme was the contradiction between American slavery and American freedom.

Douglass did not mince words. He spoke of a government that mouthed the language of liberty yet committed "crimes which would disgrace a nation of savages"; of patriotism reduced to "swelling vanity"; of hypocrisy destroying the country's "moral power abroad." Although slavery is gone, Douglass's critique remains as relevant as in 1852. But so too does his optimism that the days of empire are over, and that in the modern world abuses cannot permanently be hidden from the light of day. Douglass, not the leaders of a slaveholding republic, was the genuine patriot, who called on his listeners to reclaim the "great principles" of the Declaration from those who had defiled and betrayed them. That is a truly patriotic goal for our own Fourth of July. —Eric Foner

What to the Slave Is the Fourth of July?

This...is the birthday of your National Independence, and of your political freedom.... It carries your minds back to the day, and to the act of your great deliverance; and to the signs, and to the wonders, associated with that act.... Pride and patriotism, not less than gratitude, prompt you to celebrate and to hold it in perpetual remembrance.... The principles contained in [the Declaration of Independence] are saving principles. Stand by those principles, be true to them on all occasions, in all places, against all foes, and at whatever cost....

Fellow-citizens—Pardon me, allow me to ask, why am I called upon to speak here to-day? What have I, or those I represent, to do with your national independence? Are the great principles of political freedom and of natural justice, embodied in that Declaration of Independence, extended to us?... Would to God, both for your sakes and ours, that an affirmative answer could be truthfully returned to these questions!... But, such is not the state of the case. I say it with a sad sense of the disparity between us. I am not included within the pale of this glorious anniversary! Your high independence only reveals the immeasurable distance between us. The blessings in which you, this day, rejoice, are not enjoyed in common. The rich inheritance of justice, liberty, prosperity and independence, bequeathed by your fathers, is shared by you, not by me.... This Fourth of July is *yours*, not *mine*....

I shall see this day and its popular characteristics from the slave's point of view. Standing there, identified with the American bondman, making his wrongs mine, I do not hesitate to declare, with all my soul, that the character and conduct of this nation never looked blacker to me than on this Fourth of July! Whether we turn to the declarations of the past, or to the professions of the present, the conduct of the nation seems equally hideous and revolting. America is false to the past, false to the present, and solemnly binds herself to be false to the future....

What to the American slave is your Fourth of July? I answer, a day that reveals to him, more than all other days in the year, the gross injustice and cruelty to which he is the constant victim. To him, your celebration is a sham; your boasted liberty, an unholy license; your national greatness, swelling vanity; your sounds of rejoicing are empty and heartless; your denunciations of tyrants, brass-fronted impudence; your shouts of liberty and equality, hollow mockery; your prayers and hymns, your sermons and thanksgivings, with all your religious parade and solemnity, are to him mere bombast, fraud, deception, impiety, and hypocrisy—a thin veil to cover up crimes which would disgrace a nation of savages. There is not a nation on the earth guilty of practices more shocking and bloody, than are the people of these United States, at this very hour.

Go where you may, search where you will, roam through all the monarchies and despotisms of the old world, travel through South America, search out every abuse, and when you have found the last, lay your facts by the side of the every-day practices of this nation, and you will say with me, that, for revolting barbarity and shameless hypocrisy, America reigns without a rival....

Fellow-citizens, I will not enlarge further on your national inconsistencies. The existence of slavery in this country brands your republicanism as a sham, your humanity as a base pretense, and your Christianity as a lie. It destroys your moral power abroad; it corrupts your politicians at home. It saps the foundation of religion; it makes your name a hissing and a byword to a mocking earth. It is the antagonistic force in your government, the only thing that seriously disturbs and endangers your union. It fetters your progress; it is the enemy of improvement; the deadly foe of education; it fosters pride; it breeds insolence; it promotes vice....

Allow me to say, in conclusion, notwithstanding the dark picture I have this day presented, of the state of the nation, I do not despair of this country.... While drawing encouragement from the "Declaration of Independence," the great principles it contains and the genius of American Institutions, my spirit is also cheered by the obvious tendencies of the age. Nations do not now stand in the same relation to each other that they did ages ago. No nation can now shut itself up from the surrounding world and trot round in the same old path of its fathers without interference.... A change has now come over the affairs of mankind. Walled cities and empires have become unfashionable. The arm of commerce has borne away the gates of the strong city. Intelligence is penetrating the darkest corners of the globe.... Oceans no longer divide, but link nations together. From Boston to London is now a holiday excursion. Space is comparatively annihilated. Thoughts expressed on one side of the Atlantic are distinctly heard on the other.... No abuse, no outrage whether in taste, sport or avarice, can now hide itself from the all-pervading light.

Eric Foner is DeWitt Clinton Professor of History at Columbia University. The full text of Douglass's speech can be found at several websites, including http://douglassarchives.org/doug_a10.htm.

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COMMENT

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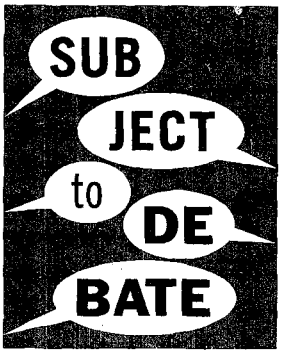
KATHA POLLITT

Moore 1, Media 0

I had a swell time at *Fahrenheit 9/11*, Michael Moore's documentary about George Bush's dubious progress from Florida to Iraq. It's his best movie—funny, heartbreaking, outraged and outrageous—and deserves its huge success. When did you last see a muckraking exposé of events that are still unfolding? The film should make the media blush for its torpor and fake judiciousness and embedment with the Administration. Moore displays footage never before seen of events most Americans know nothing about, unless they read *The Nation*, because the media haven't told them. Did you know, for example, that the Congressional Black Caucus could not get a single Democratic senator to lend the required signature to its formal protest of the certification of Bush's victory in 2000? Did you know Prince Bandar, the Saudi ambassador, dined with Bush on September 13, 2001, the day before flights began that would carry more than a hundred Saudis out of the country, including dozens of members of the extended bin Laden family? Have you seen wounded and dead Iraqis on TV, or interviews with mutilated soldiers, disillusioned soldiers—or with parents of dead GIs? If Joe Darby hadn't jump-started the Abu Ghraib scandal with those photos, you might well be seeing the brutalization of Iraqi prisoners for the first time in a brief scene in *Fahrenheit 9/11*.



Moore keeps his impish-blimpish on-screen presence down, but there are some hilarious bits—learning that Congress hadn't read the Patriot Act before passing it, he drives around the Capitol in an ice cream truck blasting it through the sound system. The best comedy, as always with Moore, is the found kind: He interviews Craig Unger (*House of Bush, House of Saud*) across the street from the Saudi Embassy and is immediately accosted by a Secret Service agent ("I'll take that as a yes," he replies genially when the agent won't comment when Moore asks if it's unusual for the Secret Service to guard foreign embassies). He tags along with two oleaginous Marine recruiters on the prowl in a down-market Flint, Michigan, shopping mall and films them as they swoop down on one young black man and practically offer him a recording contract on the spot when he mentions he's interested in music.

The odd thing is, I found the movie immensely cheering and energizing, even though I don't agree with its main thesis, drawn from Unger, that Bush's oil-business interests, particularly his close financial and personal connections with the Saudis, drove his post-9/11 decisions to go easy on Saudi Arabia and invade Afghanistan and Iraq. I think President Gore might well have invaded Afghanistan too—although, who knows, maybe the Republicans would have thwarted him out of spite. I also think that key promoters of the war in Iraq—Wolfowitz, Perle, Rumsfeld—were motivated by a sincere, if deranged, belief that overthrowing Saddam would usher in US- and Israel-friendly capitalist democracies all over the Middle East. They had, after all, been pushing for regime change for years. Like all Moore's movies, *Fahrenheit 9/11* is somewhat muddled and self-contradictory. Just as *Bowling for Columbine* excoriated the NRA while arguing that guns don't kill people, *Americans* kill people, *Fahrenheit 9/11* simultaneously argues that the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq are wrong and unnecessary and that we need to send more troops; that the Bush Administration does too much and too little to protect the country from another terrorist attack; that Bush is an idiot and a lightweight and that he is a master of calculation. Actually, come to think of it, that's not such a contradiction—but I wish Moore had acknowledged Bush's obvious political skills. It's not easy to fool 40 percent of the people 100 percent of the time.

Well, OK, so Moore isn't Mark Twain, he's a propagandist who can be funny and angry at the same time. He takes a lot of cheap shots—Paul Wolfowitz slicking back his hair with saliva, John Ashcroft crooning a patriotic anthem of his own composition, Bush smirking and looking shifty while waiting to go on air and announce the invasion of Iraq—but the point of these vignettes is not just to make us laugh and feel superior, it's to undo the aura of assurance and invincibility with which this Administration cloaks itself while it spreads fear across the land. Watching Bush sit in that elementary classroom pretending to read *My Pet Goat* for seven long minutes after being notified of the second plane crashing into the World Trade Center, you see a man who is paralyzed and stunned, who hasn't a clue, because there's no one there to tell him what to do, no stage set, like the flight deck of USS Abraham Lincoln, and no audience before which to look manly and resolute.

Moore's critics are going over the movie frame by frame, but he's phrased his most controversial contentions, about the Saudi flights, carefully. He doesn't actually say they took off while the airports were closed, and he doesn't say the bin Ladens weren't interviewed, although a viewer could get that impression. Other complaints seem trivial. Does it really matter if Moore says only one child of a congressperson or senator is serving in Iraq, and doesn't mention that a few others are in the armed forces, just not there? Of course, the scene in which Moore tries to hand out recruitment literature to politicos is unfair: It's not as if parents can enlist their kids. The scene works, though, because Moore's basic point is right: Politicians whose own kids are safely ensconced in the Ivies send off to die in Iraq the children of women like Lila Lipscomb, the vibrant working-class Flint woman Moore follows in the second half of the movie, who puts out the flag every morning and who has always encouraged her kids to join the military as a path to a better life. Her grief and rage when her son is killed in Iraq are unbearable to watch. Surrounded by her large, interracial family, she reads her son's last letter home: "He got us out here for nothing whatsoever. I'm so furious right now, Mama." There are plenty of mothers and fathers like her—but you don't see Katie Couric ("Navy SEALs rock!") interviewing *them*.

Take your friends, your relatives, your book club, your drinking buddies, take teenagers (it's R-rated), take that nice Republican in the office, take David Brooks and the staff of *The Weekly Standard*, and the Council of Economic Advisers! And then send your ticket stub to George W. Bush, so he'll know you're watching. ■

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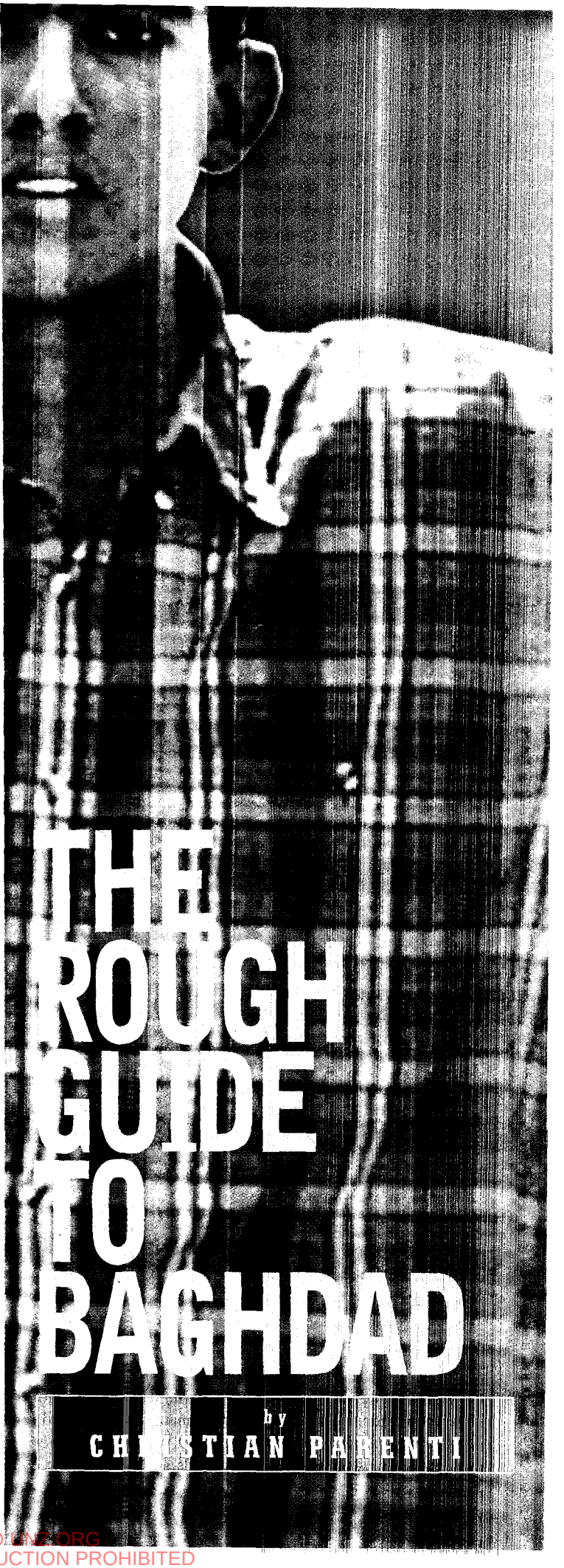

THE ROUGH GUIDE TO BAGHDAD

by CHRISTIAN PARENTI

A young white South African pilot leans in the cockpit doorway of a small NGO-chartered prop plane and gives his ten passengers the pre-flight pep talk: "At 10,000 above Baghdad International Airport, we will begin our descent in a spiral dive. This avoids surface-to-air missiles and ground fire, we hope. But don't worry, the maneuver is well within the technical capacities of the machine. Enjoy the flight to Baghdad."

The flight is fine—but the dive is fast, steep and scary.

Since April most roads into the capital of Iraq have been closed by sporadic combat and marauding gangs of looters. Westerners are special targets. Some elements in the resistance are said to pay $20,000 a head for hostages. The only truly open road is the heavily patrolled route north through Kurdistan to Turkey or Iran.

So now journalists fly in. It's the "safe" way to reach this politically diseased metropolis, which after fourteen months of US occupation and alleged reconstruction is tormented by a fever of violence, social breakdown, administrative anarchy and economic decline. The crisis now seems to feed on itself in an epidemiological fashion, with symptoms reinforcing root causes in a downward spiral. Lack of security—the central issue—means lack of electricity, which means no work, which means more violence, and so on. In response, Iraqis either cling to a blind faith that America will sort things out, or they turn to tradition, self-organization, Islam and armed resistance.

At the 1970s-style passenger terminal where we land, the long hallways and lounges are empty. Outside I find some Kroll security men headed to Baghdad and bum a ride. The twenty-kilometer dash from here to the city is called "RPG alley." This, despite the airport being contained within a huge US military base.

"This road is ridiculous," says the flak-jacketed Brit riding shotgun. He chambers a round in his short Heckler and Koch assault rifle. Recent ambushes have hit several convoys here. The only one that made the news ended with four more dead mercenaries from Blackwater USA, their SUV in flames. "The First Cav should have checkpoints every few clicks. And they should clear all surrounding areas," says the Brit. "I have no idea how they think this is supposed to work without a secure airport."

June was a bad month. The malady of occupation was in full recrudescence: car bombs killing scores each week, assassins culling the political class, routine but underreported sabotage. In the slums of east Baghdad—Sadr City—the newly arrived First Cavalry Division has almost nightly shootouts with Muqtada al-Sadr's Jeshi Mahdi, or Mahdi Army.

Ten days to sovereignty—the city waits. I awake, as usual, in a sweat to the sound of a rumbling boom. The big explosions are usually in the morning. This one sounds close. "Car bomb!" yells a colleague down the hall. Four of us are bivouacked in a cheap, almost empty Baghdad hotel run by a friendly but thuggish man from Falluja. The accommodations—along with our recently grown beards, dark tans, locally purchased cloths and preference for beat-up old cars—are all part of a low-tech "security strategy." If most Western journalists live in walled compounds with armed guards and still get kidnapped or shot up, we figure, do the opposite. Go local, blend in, try to pass as Iraqi, to the extent we are able.

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"Abu Talat called," says my colleague. "The bomb was right by where his wife works. He's headed over. We're outta here in five minutes." At al-Rashid Street, in old Baghdad, blocks from the Central Bank of Iraq, we find the aftermath. It wasn't a car bomb, just a big IED (improvised explosive device) set to hit a money truck. But the timing was off by a few seconds—commuters took the blast instead. Four are wounded, one may have already died.

Iraqi cops and bank security men with Kalashnikovs mill around a shattered wall and some twisted metal gates, while two Arab TV crews shoot video. Thirty feet away sits a victim's shattered car. Looters are already at work stripping the salvageable parts. The cops pay no attention.

Thanks in part to police inaction, kidnapping, carjacking and murder have imposed an informal dusk-to-dawn curfew in many parts of this city. The director of the Baghdad morgue tells me that he sees an average of at least 600 unsolved murders every month, adding, "There are many more cases we don't receive." In a city of roughly 4 million, this translates into a crime rate about ten or fifteen times higher than the most violent cities in America—and this has serious economic consequences.

To enter the Green Zone is to consume a thousand-milligram tablet of denial washed down with fresh-squeezed orange juice.

"Little things create big economic problems," explains Asaad Witwit, an elegant but casual Iraqi burgher, who owns four factories, three of which are currently closed. "Security is the biggest problem." We're meeting in the riverfront offices of the Iraqi Federation of Industry, a lobby group for private-sector manufacturers. Witwit is a leading board member. As we speak in English, three of his colleagues are commiserating and working the phones in fast, angry Arabic. The federation just bought a new truck-sized generator for its building, but the machine was stolen before it was even delivered. (US contractors deal with such problems by giving their mobile phone numbers to local sheiks so they can have first dibs on buying back their gear.)

Iraq's badly battered infrastructure is another problem, explains Witwit. "For example, you cannot make paint if you do not have clean water. Salts and minerals in the water ruin the paint. Or to make ice, or to can food, or process meat, you need clean water. We don't have that," he says philosophically. Behind him his colleagues rage on in Arabic about the "son of a whore" who sold them the generator and then most likely stole it back himself.

Then there are the cheap imports that have flooded the country since the US invasion. Witwit's sole working factory is a plastics plant that makes thermoses and coolers, but he has laid off most of his thirty employees because Chinese and Iranian imports are driving down prices. To upgrade and retool requires capital. "We need loan programs, investment, but the Americans do nothing. They only talk about the free market."

Christian Parenti has been covering the Iraq war for The Nation. *His book* The Freedom: Shadows and Hallucinations in Occupied Iraq, *is due out from the New Press this fall. Research support for this article was provided by the Investigative Fund of the Nation Institute.*

If Iraq's social geography were reduced to political antipodes, one pole would be the fortified and manicured American-occupied Green Zone: a huge palace and office complex built by Saddam. The other pole would be the fetid, baking eastern Baghdad slum of Sadr City, also known as Al Thawra (the revolution).

To enter the Green Zone is to consume a thousand-milligram tablet of denial washed down with fresh-squeezed orange juice. The air conditioning here is superb; everyone looks happy.

David Bourne is working his laptop at the Iraqi Business Center, an empty, glass-walled subsection of the Convention Center. Bourne, wearing a crisp media-blue oxford shirt and dark slacks, exudes Ivy League confidence. He is here to do good and to do well, at once.

"When we get the business center running, local subcontractors will be able to network and learn about bidding," he explains, as if the occupation weren't already fourteen months old. "A lot of the reconstruction hasn't begun yet, and the center will facilitate capacity-building with local firms." He pauses and then adds with considered honesty: "A lot of Iraqis think it's just about who you know. But government-funded work requires competitive bidding, transparency, quality control, all that."

He won't comment on how Halliburton and Bechtel got their huge slices of the $18.5 billion reconstruction pie. But that's already a matter of public record. Bechtel got the first installment of its no-bid billion-dollar contract on April 17, 2003, after secretive dealings with the US Agency for International Development. Halliburton also had an inside track.

On the other side of a glass wall, a uniformed janitor pushes a Zamboni-like buffer across a shining expanse of floor. Iraq seems a thousand miles away.

Now unplug from the Matrix, and the temperature suddenly soars to a brutal 115 Fahrenheit. The air reeks of sewage; hot, furnace-like gusts blow grit into your eyes. An urbanized plain of misery and squalor opens before you: the hyperviolent Sadr City. The wide boulevards, laid down in the late 1950s by the optimistic planners of the Qasim regime, are now flooded for blocks at a stretch with ankle-deep pools of green, algae-rich sewage. Heaps of garbage smolder on the medians and in empty lots. Pirated electrical wires crisscross dense side streets of mud-brick homes. Small flocks of mangy goats and sheep, shepherded by women in flowing black *abayas*, forage in the trash.

The lumpen Shiites who live here are derided by Baghdad's more urbane Sunnis as *sharugees*—an insulting term meaning "easterners" but connoting ignorance and filth. Like the N-word among some African-Americans, streetwise young Shiites have defiantly appropriated *sharugee* for their own use.

The sewage problem in Sadr City is not merely unsightly; it is a major health threat. As the head of the local public works department, or Baladia, explained it, the sewers here were never great, but the constant backup and nauseating overflow is a new problem. First there was bomb damage and then, as garbage trucks were looted or destroyed, trash clogged the sewers. Most of the special trucks needed to clear the backed-up lines were also looted. The last four were recently commandeered by US

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contractors for use all over Baghdad. Bechtel has the $1.8 billion contract to rebuild Iraq's water, sewage and electrical systems. Electrical clearance work and the rebuilding of water systems is also being carried out by a company called Washington Group International. Local engineers say the firm has done next to nothing.

At Sadr City's Al Jawadir hospital the halls are crowded with worried-looking men and women. An emaciated, greenish man is wheeled by on a gurney. Here one clearly sees the social impact of the sewer problem and the general chaos of which it is a subset.

The hospital director, Dr. Qasim al-Nuwesri, explains that the hospital serves at least a million and a half people and sees 3,000 patients a day, but suffers for lack of adequate medicine, equipment, clean water and security. "We have to get clean water shipped in," he says. "A German NGO delivers it in a tanker truck." Typhoid is rampant, he adds, and an outbreak of hepatitis E is gathering momentum, with forty new cases a week. "The coalition promises money and supplies, but there is never enough," says the director. "I am forced to reuse needles and deny people anesthesia. We only do serious emergency surgeries."

Upstairs on one of the wards we meet a 25-year-old internist named Ali Kadhem. Like many doctors, he speaks English. His face is open and boyishly innocent, and he possesses an understated yet intense personal charisma. When he talks, the other doctors and orderlies listen and watch.

Ali says gunmen enter the hospital demanding special treatment for relatives. Two weeks ago an addict pulled a pistol on him and stole morphine. One doctor was shot right in front of the hospital by thieves. He says that since April, US troops have raided the wards on three different occasions, looking for wounded Jeshi Mahdi fighters.

"They interrogated the wounded and searched in a very rough way and tore down religious posters," says the young physician. Several wounded Mahdi men, as well as civilians, have fled the hospital in fear of the raids.

"I know that some of these people died because they hid in their homes and we could not treat them," says Ali. "We could have saved them. The cause of all these problems is the Americans. We need for them to go."

The Mahdi's fighting in Karbala and Najaf, provoked in large part by US assaults, alienated huge swaths of the mainstream Shiite community—particularly the merchant class that depends on pilgrim traffic to the holy cities. But spend a day or two in Al Thawra and it's not hard to understand why people follow Muqtada al-Sadr. He is a junior religious scholar, unlike his father, who was an ayatollah, but Muqtada's leadership is primarily political, and his following, likewise, is Shiite but religiously diverse. His power is rooted in his willingness to oppose the occupation openly, just as his martyred father opposed Saddam.

More practically, he is followed because the branches of his organization deliver a slim modicum of order and stability to a few parts of Baghdad and cities farther south. In front of the hospital a man named Uda Mohame explains the logic: "Everyone cooperates with the Jeshi Mahdi. There are no police here, no government. The Mahdi direct traffic, they fix things, they do all the work."

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At the Sadr office on one of Al Thawra's main streets, I try to meet Muqtada's local representative, a 29-year-old sheik named Hassan Edhary, but he is on the run. The First Cav wants him, dead or alive. His two predecessors are already in Abu Ghraib. A few weeks ago, US tanks blew up this office. Reconstruction started the next day at dawn.

"Little boys cleaned the bricks while men rebuilt," explains a local man named Samir.

Now the walled compound, draped in black banners mourning the dead and topped with big fluttering green-and-black flags, looks as good as new. The men here are all Mahdi but they are unarmed by day. There can be no formal interviews, I am told, without the sheik's permission.

'This is called Vietnam Street because this is where we kill Americans,' says the Mahdi fighter. 'We are in a war with them.'

For the better part of a week I return again and again looking for Sheik Edhary, but he's still on the lam. As I am leaving the office after one failed attempt, a young Mahdi man says to me, "Look, the Americans attack us. That is why we fight. We have a right to respond."

It's late afternoon, another trip to Sadr City. One of my colleagues from the dive hotel and our translator roll out determined to find the Mahdi in action. They're out here somewhere; we've already seen a US patrol of two tanks and three armored Humvees.

On one of the slum's main thoroughfares, al-Radhewi Street, are several walls marked with a message in English. Big block letters read VIETNAM STREET. Farther on, a wall bears a crudely painted mural depicting a modified version of an infamous Abu Ghraib torture photo. It is the prisoner in the hood and cloak standing on a box, arms outstretched, electrical wires dangling from his limbs. Next to him in the mural is the Statue of Liberty, but in place of her torch she holds the lever of an electrical switch connected to the wires. Below is scrawled: THE FREEDOM FORM GEORGE BOSH. We snap photos and move on.

Then, before we find them, the Jeshi Mahdi find us. Two men in a sedan are suddenly next to us. "Pull over!" Now they are at our doors, hands on the pistols in their waistbands. "Who are you? What are you doing here? Why are you photographing things?"

"Sahafee canadee, sahafee canadee!" I show them my counterfeit Canadian press pass. Our translator is talking fast, explaining that we are anti-occupation, that we are trying to show the truth. He's naming his family, naming sheiks, naming Sadr men who are old friends. The undercover Mahdi fire back questions and suggest that we get out of the car. We show them the digital photos of the graffiti and offer to erase all the shots, but we ignore their request to get out. More fast Arabic goes on. Finally the Mahdi begin to relax.

"This is called Vietnam Street because this is where we kill Americans," says one of them. "We are in a war with them. That is why we stopped you. You understand? We have to protect our people." The man in charge adjusts his pistol one more time, looks around, then says, "You can go." We thank them profusely and then hit the gas. The hard spike of adrenaline in my chest releases in a warm wash of endorphins.

The next day I head back looking for Sheik Edhary, but he's still underground. On our way a pickup truck just ahead of us abruptly reverses into our taxicab with a slam, then does a fast three-point turn over the median. Suddenly everyone is backing up and turning around fast.

"Fighting ahead. We have to go!" says Hussein, a translator, journalist and computer hacker who hangs out with our ragtag crew. The next day Al Jazeera reports "around twenty Iraqi resistance fighters" killed or wounded in clashes all over Sadr City.

At the offices of the District Advisory Council, a body "elected" in a hasty, poorly publicized, US-managed referendum, there's more evidence of war. "Sorry, man. Nobody around. We're just here to secure the building," says Staff Sgt. Josh York. The twenty-five-member DAC dispersed several weeks ago after their leader was blown away in a political hit. Now the council's compound is a small US firebase.

"They've been hitting us with RPGs every night," says Sergeant York. "No casualties yet, but last night we took eleven RPGs, one at a time all through the night." The young soldier doesn't look nervous or afraid, just beat-down tired.

Finally Sheik Edhary surfaces; perhaps this has something to do with the Americans' new offer to allow Sadr's organization into electoral politics. (The Sadr people are still quite cagey about what they will do on that front.) Edhary grants an interview, but mostly we just sit and watch him in action, Hussein quietly translating the conversations around us.

Edhary wears a white turban and flowing robes. His beard is full but short, like Muqtada's. He is dark, intense and very handsome. I can't help thinking that Edhary looks like a cinematically improved version of the real Muqtada, who is stooped, pudgy and frowning.

A stream of supplicants files through Edhary's little office, asking for advice, money and letters. One lives in an IDP (internally displaced people) camp and has no roof. Can the organization help? Edhary says, "I don't have enough people to go investigate your claim. But if you can find a religious sheik in your area to write a letter on your behalf, then come back."

A young doctor explains that a group of medical workers has some money and wants to open a free or low-cost pharmacy to serve the people. Can the office contribute some money? The sheik leans close and plays with his string of black prayer beads as the young man talks. Finally, he tells the doctor that Hussein, our hacker pal, can help the clinic with its computers. Hussein and the doctor exchange numbers.

Then come a few high-tension cell-phone calls. Some sweaty Mahdi men rush in. They've just busted looters with four stolen trucks full of sugar. It turns out the trucks belong to a European NGO, not the government or some rich company. The sheik wants the vehicles and sugar returned, via the police, to the NGO.

"We have the trucks in storage. Can we turn them over tomorrow?" asks the rotund Mahdi man in charge of the bust. He's wearing a dirty football jersey. "I am your servant. I have given my whole life to the religion, but I really cannot do this tonight."

Someone else bends over and whispers to the sheik. Edhary

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looks worried. There's more whispering. Edhary leans away from the men at his desk and snaps taut a section of his black prayer beads, then counts the little glass balls. He is "asking God" for advice. An even bead count means yes; odd means no.

"No! No! Absolutely not," the sheik bounces up from the desk, his outer black robe slipping from one shoulder. He's addressing the sweaty man. "The trucks must be returned tonight. If the trucks do not move now we will be blamed. Either you do it now, or just go and don't do it at all. I will find someone else." The sheik is electric with stress but dignified.

"I am your servant, as you wish," says the Mahdi guy, but he looks pissed as he and his posse sweep out to deal with the trucks.

If there is anything like "progress" in Iraq it takes place here, under the radar, in the rubble of occupation. Sadr's followers, despite many faults, including thuggishness and misogyny, are central to creating what order there is in this ravaged ghetto.

On the last Friday before the handover I go back to Vietnam Street for a mass prayer. This time, the Jeshi Mahdi are out in full force, armed with pistols and AK-47s. Line after line of them are politely and efficiently searching a crowd of more than 10,000 people who have come to lay their prayer mats in the street, worship and hear a political sermon. The Mahdi search me several times, and I am ushered to the front, walking barefoot across the solid field of prayer mats; some are mere towels, others are intricate, colorful carpets. The sermon, by a Sadr sheik named Ous al-Khafji, attacks the occupation but calls for calm. The Mahdi have declared a cease-fire.

Under a blazing sun, with squads of men and boys spraying rose water on the congregants, the crowd chants, "Ya Allah, Ya Ali, Ya Husein," meaning with Allah, etc., then "Muqtada! Muqtada! Muqtada!" At the end the worshipers all shake hands, then disperse.

Later I am granted an interview with some Mahdi fighters. They make sure I can't see where I am headed as we drive deep into the side streets of Sadr City. Our interview takes place in an abandoned shop; there are three fighters, two of whom were jailed and tortured under Saddam. They repeat the party line about wanting peace but add, "If the Americans arrest people we will strike."

One of them moves a tarp and reveals a huge 155-millimeter artillery shell and a long spool of wire. It's an IED. "If they attack, we have this rat poison, for the American rats," says the fighter pointing to the bomb. "But God willing, we will not be forced to use it." Time for me to go.

Clearly "sovereignty" remains fragmented, localized, ephemeral and mostly imaginary. Neither Iraqis nor the Americans have control. The new Prime Minister, Iyad Allawi, is threatening martial law. How he might impose this and how it would differ from the current methods of occupation are difficult to envision. In the new Iraq, only chaos is truly sovereign. ■

Letter From Athens

by Maria Margaronis

The people of Greece shall host unique Games on a human scale, inspiring the world to celebrate Olympic values.
—official website, Athens 2004

The Olympic Games are coming home to die.
—anarchist graffito

The poster for *The Day After Tomorrow* on the main road north out of Athens (beefed up like a wrestler on steroids) shows a looming, wind-swept Parthenon menaced by ice and snow. It's an unlikely image, but it suits the moment well. While the world's media run endless will-they-won't-they stories doubting Athens's readiness for the Olympic Games, Greeks are beginning to worry about the storm that threatens when the party's over.

For Greece the Olympics are not just a giant sporting event, a deadline for overdue capital projects or even a blockbuster rebranding opportunity. They're also the crowning moment of fifty years of rapid modernization, chaotic and often painful—a passage from peasant farming supported by a large diaspora to a mixed economy wooing foreign investors, from the periphery of the developed world to the middle echelons of the European Union. Archeologists have rushed to salvage evidence of ancient Athens from the orgy of pre-Olympic construction, but Greece's recent history is written on the city's face, in the glass air-conditioned towers that line the new main roads, the organic cafes and ethnic eateries tucked into the center, the shantytowns beyond the western hills. The big dig that has swathed the streets in miles of orange netting is just the warp-speed version of a familiar process, and how Greeks feel about the Games partly depends on where they think the ride is taking them. My more prosperous or optimistic friends have tickets to the show. The rest plan to flee the city, whose "Olympic zones" will also be cleared of stray dogs, beggars and the Athenians' omnipresent fuming, honking cars.

Even their skepticism, though, is complicated by a touchy national pride. Greece is the smallest country to host the summer Games since the Helsinki Games of 1952, and the first since September 11. It began to prepare for the Games during the huge economic push that brought it into the Eurozone in 2001, with its attendant price rises and austerity measures. (Before this year's EU expansion, Greek workers earned the second-lowest wages in the Union.) Laughing at Greek incompetence has become a favorite sport in the international media. As a result, Athens is in the grip of an anxious bravado, as if you'd invited your boss

Maria Margaronis writes from The Nation*'s London bureau.*

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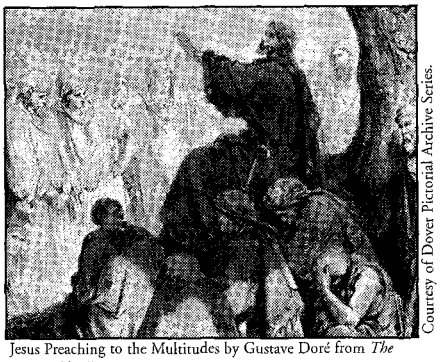

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to dinner and decided at 5 o'clock that you had to replaster the dining room. Politics, like the roof of the Olympic stadium, is partially suspended.

A year ago the city buzzed with tension and possibility. The modernizing socialist government of Costas Simitis had revolutionized Greek foreign policy but was already fatally undermined by its old guard's corruption—a gargantuan subterranean fungus known as *ta diaplekoumena*, or "the entanglements." A solution to the de facto partition of Cyprus was still in reach under Kofi Annan's plan for federation, carefully nurtured by Simitis and his foreign minister, George Papandreou, despite the Greek and Turkish Cypriot governments' cold feet. The members of the terrorist groupuscule November 17 had finally been arrested, but Greece's sleazy private TV channels were using the soap opera of the trial to write off the whole history of the left. And the Olympics—well, the Olympics were a year off, an opportunity for idealism and new development or an excuse for contractors and politicians to line their pockets, depending on whom you asked.

This March the PaSok government fell in a landslide to the conservative New Democracy, led by Constantine Caramanlis. In April the Greek Cypriots voted against the Annan plan, closing the door on an unrepeatable opportunity and isolating themselves at the moment of their accession to the European Union. The change of government has brought a kind of relief; even PaSok stalwarts agree that a major cleanup is in order, and Papandreou, as new party leader, has embarked on it with a vengeance. (Of course, he may not survive the old guard's wrath: The knives have been publicly drawn since he announced his list of young, clean and untested candidates for the European Parliament.) But apart from a few promises of economic reform, New Democracy, elected mainly for not being PaSok, is keeping mum about its plans and projects. The Cyprus referendum has left a depressed silence that deepens as the country takes the measure of what's lost. And the impending Olympics have clamped a not-in-front-of-the-neighbors lid on substantive discussion of the future.

Athens seems to be headed for the Montreal model (the '76 Olympics almost bankrupted Quebec) rather than the Barcelona miracle.

The organizers of Athens 2004 have made much of the ideals of "Olympism" and the return of the Games to their birthplace. (Like others before them, they've also discovered ancient pedigrees for all sorts of modern exigencies: "Sponsoring is a tradition that goes back to Ancient Greece, where wealthy Athenians would contribute financially [to public enterprises]...") Their huge headquarters, which has landed like a flying saucer in the working-class neighborhood of Nea Ionia, is packed with purposeful young people. Foreign press spokesman Stratos Safioleas is a member of Greece's new generation of foreign-educated, idealistic "technocrats"; last year I met his peers in Papandreou's Foreign Ministry, where the serious young faces, crisp shirtsleeves and Anglo-American buzzwords ("candidate," "overview," "mainstream") made me imagine for a moment that I was backstage at *The West Wing*. Skeptics may carp from left and right at their reforming zeal and foreign ways, but in the long run, though they're out of power now, the future belongs to them.

Safioleas spoke with studied forbearance about the negative press that has dogged the Athens Games ("after all, the delays were real") and unguarded enthusiasm about the outcome: "When you think of the way people cheered that Swiss marathon runner who came in last, or the African swimmer who could barely make it because his country had no facilities, and you ask why these people move us, you understand why the Games are important. It's a human story, about human effort." I left his office with my cynicism dented: Perhaps there's more to international sport than steroids and sponsorship. Even better, Safioleas insisted that the change of government hadn't affected the Olympic preparations: "The Games never became a political football." So entrenched is political patronage in Greece that a mere Cabinet reshuffle knocks over jobs like dominoes; anything that shifts that culture must be a good thing.

But old habits die hard. Only a few hours later the minister for environment, physical planning and public works, Georgios Souflias, was wondering aloud, "for financial and other reasons," whether Greece should have taken on the Olympics in the first place; Athens 2004 head Gianna Angelopoulou-Daskalaki and Athens Mayor Dora Bakoyianni, both from New Democracy, were having a public turf war. The Furies of the Athens press went wild. "Unprecedented confusion in the government," roared PaSok's *Ta Nea*; "Stab in the Back," shrieked the leftish *Eleftherotypia*.

Unfortunately, although he chose the wrong moment to make it, Souflias has a point. The Olympics budget has ballooned from 4 billion euros to around 6 billion; the deputy finance minister has said that paying off the debt will take about ten years. Fear of terrorism and rumors of chaos have devastated ticket sales; hotel bookings are also down. Service-sector workers are pushing for some payback before the deficit bites: Firefighters, police and paramedics have demanded Olympics bonuses; ambulance drivers have threatened an August work stoppage, as have hotel employees. Taxi drivers are up in arms at being sidelined by "official" vehicles. Athens seems to be heading for the Montreal model (the '76 Olympics almost bankrupted Quebec) rather than the hoped-for Barcelona miracle.

A significant part of the budget overrun is due to security costs, estimated at more than 1 billion euros—more than four times what was spent in Sydney in 2000. Greece has been at the forefront of the movement to revive the Olympic Truce, the sixteen-day cessation of hostilities that was the reason for the ancient Games' foundation, and which remained almost unbroken for 1,200 years. For the first time the Olympic torch is bringing its message of peace to all five continents. But this summer the airspace over Athens will be patrolled by NATO surveillance planes; US battleships and brand-new Coast Guard boats will blockade the shore; 45,000 armed guards and 50,000 police will spread out through the streets; frogmen with M-16s and grenade launchers will swim in Piraeus harbor. The US company SAIC (whose clients include the Joint Chiefs of Staff) has sold Greece a $290,000 C4I system, which will survey the city with some 1,400 cameras. Quoting an "informed American source" against categorical official denials, *Ta Nea* reported that the US, British and Israeli teams' security guards will be armed

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even inside the stadiums, in contravention of the Greek Constitution and Olympic principle.

Obviously the dangers are real, and everyone wants the Olympics to be safe. But many Greeks feel that Athens has been forced—by American pressure and media paranoia—to accept extravagant measures that will militarize the Games, permanently invade their privacy and infringe their country's sovereignty. SAIC's fixed cameras and the Coast Guard boats will stay on long after the athletes have gone home, watching the citizenry and keeping migrants and asylum seekers from Europe's longest coast, a measure long demanded by the European Union.

And still the foreign media aren't satisfied: Fear, as we know, sells papers. In May a reporter from Rupert Murdoch's London *Times* entered the stadium, still a building site, at night to test Olympic security; although she was arrested, the paper splashed her piece on its front page, causing uproar in Athens. ("It's a good thing something didn't fall on her head and kill her," one of the guards—now primed to sniff out journalists as well as terrorists—told me. "The smallest—the smallest—screwup there is a foot long.") In today's jittery atmosphere, such "scoops" are paid for in lost ticket sales and athletes scared away.

Santiago Calatrava's designs for the stadium and the velodrome may have cost more than this country can afford, but they are spectacularly beautiful. The velodrome looks like a gray-blue prehistoric beast with white transparent wings, a dolphin's back breaking the water; it has lightness and movement, strength and humility, and it looks perfectly at home under the Attic sky. Supervising engineer Nikos Louridas showed me round the site—"I do this because I want to; you can't not explain things and then complain when people report them wrong"—while workers swarmed across the polycarbonate panels high above our heads; for the first time I wished that I was going to the Games.

Here too, though, there's an ugly price to pay. Greece's immigration policies are among the most chaotic and iniquitous in Europe. As Louridas explained, a huge majority of the unskilled laborers at the stadium are Albanian, working with Pakistanis, Indians, Nigerians and Bulgarians; the technicians are mainly Polish, Ukrainian, Bulgarian and Romanian. What will happen to them when the Games are over? According to the Athens construction workers' union, about a third of the foreign workers on Olympics projects are undocumented; those who have papers can't renew them without evidence of continuous employment. And it's these workers who've taken the fall, sometimes literally, for the delays. Louridas assured me that there have been no serious accidents at the stadium, and that safety equipment is always provided, though not consistently used. But at the Olympic village, according to union investigators, at least thirteen workers have been killed because of lack of proper training, pressure to work too fast and contractors pocketing the health and safety budget.

Olympic truce and fortress Athens; human scale and giant deficits; athletic pride and broken bodies. To the small but well-organized group of students I met marching in Athens against a European plan to recognize private universities, the contradictions utterly devalue the ideals. "For developing countries like ours," said Aris, "these so-called national goals like entering the Eurozone or hosting the Olympics just serve the interests of capitalism. There is no Olympic ideal, there is no Olympic

"Even if our political leaders cannot read the pulse of a changing world, the people do."

—Terry Tempest Williams

from "Engagement," part three of the author's three-part series
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truce. 'National pride' is just a cover for exploitation."

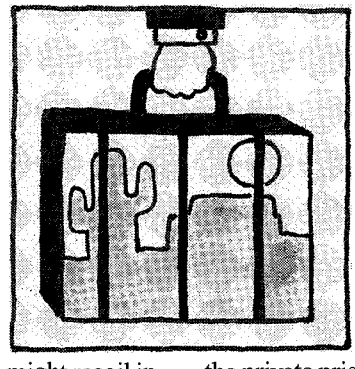
He's right, of course. But in these days of international capital and global markets, Greece has no alternative but to join the race—running, as a journalist friend put it, "like a well-trained athlete with his shoelaces untied." For the participants the Games will almost certainly be a last-minute success; for the Greeks the hangover will last for many years to come. In its eagerness to prove itself one of the big boys, Greece made ambitious plans that it could barely handle; no one else is going to pay the piper. But then, perhaps it couldn't have happened any other way. Next door to a postmodern Pizza Hut full of men playing backgammon and drinking coffee, the filmmaker Amalia Zeppou put it to me like this: "The slogans make a big fuss about the Games coming home, but what is home? What is it we love here? There's an Athens behind the scenes that matters to me; people's desire that there should be something behind the ideals in spite of everything makes me, well, proud to be part of this country. But every year the Games get bigger and more grandiose, with sponsors, billboards, giant business deals. There's no way Greece could get away from that. Everything is pushing us away from why we got the Games in the first place, pressing us to be the same and worse than all the rest." ■

PRIVATE PRISONS THRIVE ON CHEAP LABOR AND THE HUNGER OF JOB-STARVED TOWNS.

Incarceration, Inc.

SASHA ABRAMSKY

If you want to win a political race in the little south-central Arizona town of Florence, look for work in the area or just hear the local gossip, chances are pretty high that you'll find your way to Gibby's Bar. All day long, behind its old saloon doors, along its dim interior, that's where the town drinks. Surrounded by slightly absurd-looking saguaro cacti and harsh scrub-desert, along with a smattering of cotton fields and pecan farms, Florence is a raw town whose men and women drink hard and talk a talk from which more delicately constituted big-city dwellers might recoil in horror. The copper miners—the few who are left after decades of downsizing—come here after a day's work in their union jobs in the surrounding red-rock mountains. And so do the prison guards.



CAITLIN DOVER

These days, as is the case with so many other depressed Main Street communities, there's no shortage of correctional officers. They come from the vast, and continually growing, state prison that's been in Florence for as long as Arizona has been a state (the prison's gigantic, ponderous, red-leather-covered ledgers from the early days now reside in the Pinal County historical museum, just down Highway 79, as do the nooses from executions and several of the leather belts used to strap down those condemned to die before they were gassed); they come from the county jail; they come from the two private prisons, one for low-end felons from Arizona, the other mainly housing out-of-state inmates from Alaska and Hawaii; and they come from the sprawling federal holding facilities in the dirt-poor neighboring town of Eloy, some run by the Feds, others under private contracts, which hold Immigration and Customs Enforcement and US Marshals Service detainees. Many of the guards used to be miners. Others commute from job-starved communities across the south and central belts of Arizona.

Sasha Abramsky is a freelance journalist whose work has appeared in The Atlantic Monthly, New York *magazine,* The Village Voice, Rolling Stone *and* The Nation.

"Our town supposedly has 17,500 people in it," muses Don Penson, an iron-jawed 66-year-old retired major from the state prison, whose son-in-law is warden of the CSC Florence West private facility. "[But] only 3,500 are free-world people." The rest, he explains, are prisoners.

In 1978, when Penson began working in corrections, Arizona had about 3,200 inmates. Today, that number is more than 31,000 and still growing, with much of the momentum for the ongoing expansion squarely attributable to the private prison lobby—which recently succeeded in getting the industry exempted from most state taxes. Private prison companies lure state-employed guards by offering short-term bonuses and pay raises. They do not dwell on the fact that, unlike the unionized state prison guards—whose union, AFSCME, has negotiated a generous, and guaranteed, pension package over the years—private guards receive a benefits package that in the long term is virtually worthless. For a few thousand dollars in ready cash, the newly hired private guards give up the possibility of a lifelong guaranteed retirement income. "Ten grand was the going rate last year," David Mendoza, longtime legislative director for AFSCME, says over breakfast in downtown Phoenix. "Five thousand dollars up front; five thousand if they stick it out for a couple years. That buys a pickup truck. The young ones, not thinking about retirement, they're easy prey."

Over the past couple of months, Gibby's Bar has been full of talk about how Terry Stewart, onetime head of Arizona's Department of Corrections, and more recently founder and head of the private security and prison consulting firm Advanced Correctional Management, was dispatched to Iraq, along with his old DOC deputy, Chuck Ryan, to advise on "prison reconstruction." At first, it seemed like easy money: In its $87 billion war package, Congress set aside $10 million to hire 100 prison consultants for six months, working out to an average of $100,000 per consultant, or somewhere in the region of $16,000 and change per month—no wonder Gibby's was rife with stories of locals decamping from

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their Florence jobs to take on prison duty in Iraq. But the Abu Ghraib torture scandal is beginning to cast an unwelcome light on the private prison industry, from whose ranks key members of the Justice Department's Iraqi "criminal justice reconstruction team" were drawn. After all, Abu Ghraib was controlled in the early days by one Lane McCotter; to spend time in Iraq, McCotter, who returned to the United States in September, took a leave of absence from his job as director of business development for corrections at Management and Training Corporation, a Centerville, Utah–based private prison company that hired him after he resigned as head of Utah's department of corrections following a scandal surrounding inmate deaths. After he returned, MTC began considering a bid, in conjunction with another US private prison company, to manage one of the new "Supermax" prisons being developed in Iraq (this was dropped after the Abu Ghraib scandal).

"In importing democracy in America to Iraq," says Bret Huggins, a public defender, a vice president of Arizona Attorneys for Criminal Justice and a no-nonsense, beer-swilling Gibby's regular, "we've decided they needed a private prison system. It's another Bush giveaway to corporate America."

Under the current Administration the private prison industry has aggressively expanded its reach at both the state and federal levels.

As sordid as it is, it's no great surprise that the private prison industry would want a piece of the Iraq pie. Under the current Administration the industry has aggressively expanded its reach at both the state and federal levels, cashing in on the post-9/11 opportunity to provide more beds for immigration detainees.

Florida Police Benevolent Association legislative assistant Ken Kopczynski, who has spent years tracking the expansion of the private prison sector (the state PBA opposes these institutions because they encroach on union territory, but also on public safety grounds), has identified close to 300 state and federal prisons, jails, juvenile detention facilities and holding centers for illegal immigrants operated by the private sector nationwide, housing some 132,000. Many of these have opened in the post-9/11 era, and more are planned, with proponents telling local communities that building detention facilities is practically a patriotic duty.

In Arizona, activists managed to put the kibosh on a plan to create a 3,200-bed private prison for women, which would have been the largest women's prison in the world. In Santa Fe, New Mexico, opponents prevented the siting of a private immigration holding facility. Proposals for a vast, privately operated federal facility in Maryland were defeated after both of the state's US senators attached their names to the "no" campaign. Yet while opponents have managed to apply the brakes successfully against a handful of proposed facilities, today private prison companies are central participants in the incarceration business nationally. "They say, 'Here's economic development. This business wants to come in and give you jobs,'" says Edwin Bender of the Institute on Money and State Politics. "They don't tell the communities the companies make a profit on the margins, and that profit relies on low wages and poor job training."

Throughout the border states of the Southwest, across the Southeast and in the Midwest, ribbons of privately operated federal facilities are springing up. Texas has the most private prisons and holding facilities. Kopczynski estimates that seventy-three of the country's close to 300 private detention centers are in the Lone Star State, and recently the border town of Laredo gave the go-ahead for a mammoth, 2,800-bed warehouse for those slated to be deported. Fifty more facilities are divvied up among Arizona, California and New Mexico.

Twenty years ago, in the early days of America's prison boom, a handful of private companies, most of them with broad expertise in the security industry, saw an opportunity. Their founders, the healer-quacks of a crime-fearing age, hoped to cash in on incarceration, and for several years their business models appeared unstoppable. Corrections Corporation of America (CCA), Wackenhut, CSC and others made enough headway to take their enterprises public. By the early 1990s, as states scrambled to find beds to house War on Drugs prisoners, three-strikers and others on the wrong end of the tough-on-crime stick, private prisons had come to be seen almost as angels of salvation. The companies built prisons quickly, sometimes not even billing the states for the building costs; they claimed to be able to operate on a lower cost per inmate, per day than could the state prisons; they often incorporated newer technologies and architectural innovations; and they stirred up competition in a field long the purview of largely unaccountable state bureaucrats.

One after another, state legislatures, many of them passing bills drafted by the industry-friendly, ultra-conservative American Legislative Exchange Council, opened up their corrections systems to private companies and lavished tax breaks on them.

By the mid-1990s, more than 4 percent of all prisoners were being held in private facilities, and many analysts were predicting that the infant industry would grow exponentially over the coming years. Some hoped to take over the running of entire state prison systems—indeed, as far back as the 1980s, CCA had approached Tennessee with a proposition to run its system; others put their faith in a more stealthy, incremental approach. In New Mexico, a state that ultimately went further than any other in its zest for privatization, by 2000 fully 40 percent of state inmates were living in private prisons. "People want to see wrongdoers go to prison, but at the same time they don't want to pay for it," explains Geoffrey Segal, director of privatization and government reform policy at the pro-privatization Reason Public Policy Institute.

Then, in the late 1990s, private prison companies began taking some serious knocks. Whereas industry-funded studies had asserted that private prisons gave more bang for the buck than their public counterparts, studies by independent researchers called this assertion into question; a number of high-profile abuse and escape cases dented law enforcement confidence in their facilities and eroded the value of their stock; and a series of lawsuits by disgruntled investors further ate away at credibility and profits. Perhaps most devastating of all, CCA and other companies found that they had built too many prisons entirely on spec, and when the country's prison population stopped growing so dramatically, they had a bunch of expensive prisons with no prisoners to fill them [see Eric Bates, "Private Prisons," January 5, 1998, and "CCA, the Sequel," June 7, 1999].

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Back at Gibby's Bar, one guard, who used to work at a private facility in Florence, claims that the prison's staff were ordered to arbitrarily tear-gas inmates; that prisoners were locked up in isolation units without the correct administrative procedures being followed; that senior officers were hired who had been fired from state prisons for having sex with inmates and smuggling contraband. Inside other prisons, such as the CCA facility in Youngstown, Ohio, staff abuse of inmates was so manifest that state and federal agencies ultimately yanked their contracts and left the facility empty (the CCA facility reopened as a private prison for federal detainees in April).

In the past few years, however, CCA has received a face-lift; Wackenhut's prison holdings successfully spun off into the GEO Group; and cash-strapped state and federal agencies have once again turned to them as a way to maintain their prison complexes without having to raise taxes or seek voter approval for the issuing of billions of dollars of general-revenue prison bonds. Referring specifically to federal agencies responsible for detaining illegal immigrants and those charged with federal crimes, Geoffrey Segal says, "It'll be very hard for any of these agencies to build a new facility without strongly considering it being private, simply because they don't have the money."

Many impoverished counties have in recent years essentially converted themselves into for-profit prison speculators.

Many small states have chosen to export large numbers of their prisoners to out-of-state private facilities rather than bear the cost of building their own new prisons (a handful of Western legislators have even proposed building private prisons in Mexico to house noncitizen state prisoners). In December 2003, in New Hampshire, the Governor's Efficiency in Government Commission recommended privatizing the entire Department of Corrections. Software entrepreneur John Babiarz, who had never previously worked in corrections, and one other commission member were responsible for this recommendation. "New Hampshire needs the money elsewhere," Babiarz explains. "States have to have prisons and people need to be incarcerated. The question is, How do we do it cheaper? We can't do it alone as a government agency. Maybe just the idea of privatization has some people thinking they need to operate more efficiently."

At the same time, many impoverished counties have in recent years essentially converted themselves into for-profit prison speculators, often in conjunction with private companies, their lobbyists and middlemen. These small counties have issued bonds to build prisons and immigrant detention centers and have then approached federal agencies, trying to woo prisoner contracts by offering rock-bottom prices.

Close to 600 miles southeast of Florence, the dying oil town of Pecos, in the remote West Texas county of Reeves, is praying that the GEO Group can bring 800 state prisoners from Arizona to town. And fast.

Pecos—bona fide cowboy territory, where in 1883 the world's first ever rodeo wowed locals—boomed in the 1950s, its farmers' pockets flush with cotton dollars. It crashed somewhat in the 1960s. Then in the 1970s it boomed again, this time floating on the West Texas oil rush. In the 1980s, when the local oil industry bottomed out, the city once more lost its bearings. Its population of 9,000 started dwindling, then collapsing, its young people began leaving, cinder-block and wood houses were left to decay, and the dry, dusty desert began reclaiming abandoned lots. Ugly and aimless, Pecos began casting around for a third boom. With prisons, Reeves County officials thought they had found the answer.

In the late 1980s, the county issued revenue bonds to build a 1,000-bed prison, which they then leased out to the Federal Bureau of Prisons. In the mid-1990s a newly elected judge, Jimmy Galindo, and the four county commissioners arranged for another bond issue to construct a second 1,000-bed prison. Again, the Feds stepped in with a nice contract, lured by the low fees requested by Reeves County.

Outside the prison system, however, things were going from bad to worse. A decade-long drought crippled local farming; a local frozen-food company closed down, with the loss of more than 500 jobs; and a salt mine shut down with the loss of 800 more. Prisons, it seemed—as well as the ubiquitous edge-of-town Wal-Mart—were the only source of income.

With this backdrop, a couple of years back Galindo and the commissioners got greedy. With no indication that the Bureau of Prisons was interested in a third Pecos facility, they authorized the issuing of millions of dollars more in bonds for yet another add-on to the prison complex. It raised the total value of the bonds issued for prisons since the late 1980s to approximately $90 million—a vast sum for a county with an annual budget of only $5 million. Built entirely on spec, the prison, a prefab shard on a windswept desert plateau, opened for business in March. "Judge Galindo really thought he could make Pecos the prison capital of the United States," says County Treasurer Linda Clark.

There was only one problem: The Feds didn't want to send any more prisoners down to Pecos. With no prisoners and no incoming money, Reeves County found itself having to service a bond debt that came to close to $500,000 a month. What little surplus the county had been making on its contracts with the Bureau of Prisons for the first two facilities, money that had gone to cushion the general fund slightly, now went back into servicing debt for the empty third prison.

Galindo, a large man with salt-and-pepper hair and an ingratiating smile that rapidly turns sour when asked questions about the prisons, abruptly left his office in the county courthouse and set up shop in a small building within the sprawling prison complex one mile southwest of town. There, carefully avoiding the prying eyes of his county treasurer and auditor—as well as a handful of ineffective and somewhat conspiratorial residents who had sworn to bring Galindo to his knees—he began desperately wooing the private prison sector, hoping they would come in and bail out the county.

At the end of 2003, GEO Group agreed to take over the three facilities on a ten-year contract, and to use its out-of-state contacts to bring in prisoners to fill the empty, dollar-eating third site. Since the prison was already built, and since the county carried the responsibility for servicing the debt, it was essentially a risk-free proposition for the corporation. Moreover, according to county

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auditor Lynn Owens, as soon as the total prison population for the three facilities rises above 2,200, GEO's monthly fee is slated to rise from $62,500 to $330,000, whether that population is 2,201 or 3,000. Since the two existing prisons already have a combined population of more than 2,000, and since the county still has to pay the salaries of all the guards, the medical expenses of prisoners, all programming costs, food expenses and utilities, Owens believes this contract, negotiated by Galindo, amounts to a sweetheart deal for the private company. So why pay GEO this much money? "We've spent almost a year now trying to attract inmates" to the third prison, Owens explains. "We haven't attracted inmates. Through GEO's expertise they can generate us inmates." Using that expertise, GEO immediately began wooing Arizona, a state that imports hundreds of prisoners from Alaska and Hawaii to do time in its private facilities, while also exporting its own state prisoners to private sites in Texas and Oklahoma.

Galindo ignored repeated phone calls and visits to his courthouse office. I did, however, finally corner him in his prison office early one morning. The important thing, Galindo insisted, was that I understand that he was only interested in providing jobs to his constituents. "It's unfortunate that so many people are incarcerated," the judge stated, a slight frown of empathy on his face. "But given the laws with regards to drug trafficking and other illegal activities, that trend more than likely is not going to slow down. I believe we provide a vital service to our customers—and we live in a part of this country where it's very difficult to create and sustain jobs in a global market. [Prisons] become a very clean industry for us to provide employment to citizens. I look at it as a community development project."

These counties may never be able to break even, yet even before the first prisoners arrive the private companies make huge profits.

Amazingly, when it comes to county prison building, and private prison company brazenness, Pecos doesn't top out the scale. A slew of even poorer, more sparsely populated Texas counties, have recently been effectively hijacked by extraordinarily aggressive prison companies that have convinced the commissioners to build prisons and holding facilities on spec, paid for through bonds issued via a shell company known as a "public facility corporation," whose board members are the county commissioners and judges, while at the same time signing a contract to bring the private companies in to manage whatever prison ends up opening. In each instance, the private company has essentially built in the right to walk away from the project, at no cost to itself, should the prisoners and the money not start flowing in. Feasibility studies of these deals by opponents of the industry have cast considerable doubt on whether the counties will ever be able to break even on their prisons, yet even before the first prisoners arrive the private companies and their middlemen routinely make huge profits from advance payouts of the money raised from gullible private investors by the bond issue.

In the tiny hamlet of Sierra Blanca, the county seat of Hudspeth County, Texas, just east of El Paso, junk bonds claiming to pay an astonishing 12 percent interest (close to double the interest paid on the Pecos prison bonds) are funding a $24 million facility that will be operated by Emerald Correctional Management—the same company that convinced La Salle County, in South Texas, to issue an even larger junk bond for an equally shaky prison project a couple of years back. As in La Salle, the company promised the prison would lure either immigration prisoners or US Marshals Service detainees and, in so doing, generate a domino effect of huge economic advances. Yet in both cases, the huge prisons will effectively tap the arid counties' existing reserves of water—meaning, in effect, that no new businesses can now come in without the county having to spend huge amounts of cash to upgrade the water infrastructure.

When I walked into County Judge Becky Dean Walker's office on the second floor of the sprawling Hudspeth County courthouse to interview her about the decision to get into the incarceration business, the first question she asked was, "Are you sure you're not with Billy Addington?" At the end of the interview she repeated the question. This time around, I asked who Billy Addington was. "He's the only one in town against the prison," the judge answered. Walker's husband, who had just come in, added bitterly, "He's always against everything in this town."

Addington, it turned out, was indeed against the prison. A thin, middle-aged man with straggly long hair and the threadbare working clothes of someone without a lick of spare cash, Addington lives in a stone house on an unpaved road, surrounded by hulks of old, rusting cars, just behind Interstate 10. His phone number is unlisted (he claims because of death threats), and his property is protected by snapping dogs.

Addington's grandfather moved to Sierra Blanca close to a hundred years ago, and Bill regards this hostile corner of West Texas as his heritage, and preserving its integrity his obligation. He alienated the town's political elite by waging a decades-long, and ultimately victorious, legal campaign to stop the government from opening a huge radioactive waste dump in the county; and he further cemented his reputation as a crazy radical by waging a public relations war against the county's decision to open a toxic sewage sludge dump—every day, for nearly a decade, between 200 and 400 tons of New York State sewage, waste deemed too toxic for dumping within the Empire State, was unloaded from rail cars and emptied onto 79,000 acres on the other side of the low-rise mesa from Sierra Blanca. Now he finds himself the most vocal opponent of the new prison being constructed hardly more than a stone's throw from his property. "I tell you what," Addington says fiercely. "It's built on a house of cards. It is a risky thing."

Risky or not, Sierra Blanca's new facility is rapidly rising from its foundations, another rolled-barbed-wire-surrounded concrete scar on the West Texas scrub. Another symbol of the new priorities and the new economic realities reshaping an increasingly hollowed-out America. There is, says Judge Walker, no reason not to build the prison. If it goes well, she says, it may help bring the depressed county a handful of jobs. If it doesn't, then "the county could suffer if we wanted to bond something again. It'd be harder to get bonds. But Hudspeth County is poor enough that it doesn't do bonds. I'm not sure exactly how it works. I don't know. What the county hoped, the commissioners were hoping to accomplish, is jobs." ■

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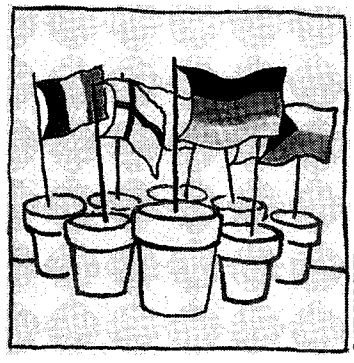
JOSCHKA FISCHER ENVISIONS A EUROPEAN ALTERNATIVE TO AMERICAN HEGEMONY.

German Greens and Pax Europa

PAUL HOCKENOS

Berlin

Six years ago, during his first week in office, German Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer, also the leader of the country's Green Party, made perfectly clear that he was "the foreign minister of Germany, not of the Greens" and that he would pursue a German, not a Green, foreign policy. Since then, he has not broken his word.



CAITLIN DOVER

This has given dyed-in-the-wool Greens plenty to sulk about, and even grounds to quit the party altogether. For the direction of Germany's foreign policy has, at times, looked to leftists more right wing than that of its conservative predecessor. Barely had Fischer moved into the foreign ministry when the new red-green leadership, a coalition of Social Democrats and Greens, enlisted Germany in the spring 1999 NATO campaign against Yugoslavia, the first time German troops had entered combat since World War II. Since then, German soldiers have been dispatched to Kosovo, Macedonia, Congo, Afghanistan, Kuwait and the Horn of Africa. (When the red-green coalition took office, there were German troops only in Bosnia and Herzegovina, part of the NATO-led peacekeeping force, a deployment that the then-opposition Greens had tried to block.) Germany is now, after the United States, the largest supplier of troops to peacekeeping missions worldwide.

For two decades, both on the streets and in the Bundestag, the German Greens have engaged with geopolitical issues, the moral crux of the matter for the left: post-Holocaust Germany's proper place in the world. The Greens were born in 1980 amid nationwide demonstrations against the deployment of US nuclear missiles on German soil, and their foreign policy positions still reflect the spirit of those days. Their 1998 campaign platform called for a demilitarized Germany in a demilitarized Europe, an end to military conscription and the replacement of NATO with a pan-European security order. One strand that runs through the left's critique is a deep distrust of the exercise of national power across state borders, and in particular of German power, which they fear could trigger the resurgence of a toxic nationalism. Like a reforming alcoholic, Germany still has to be kept away from the object of its addiction at all costs.

In contrast to Green positions on domestic issues, like the transport of nuclear waste and renewable energy initiatives, the Greens' foreign policy agenda never underwent the moderating process of implementation. On the state level, where red-green coalitions had come to power across much of western Germany, the former "anti-party" party learned how to participate in parliamentary democracy: how to compromise, build consensus and implement policy. In the process, the Greens turned long left-wing wish lists into serviceable domestic policies, many of them adopted by the mainstream parties. But as the opposition in the federal arena, the Greens could stake out holier-than-thou stands on foreign affairs without risking anything.

No single example demonstrates the Greens' uneasiness with Germany's full-fledged debut on the world stage and the responsibilities that come with it than their mixed responses to the Balkan wars. As late as 1995, most Greens saw the participation of German troops in the peacekeeping mission planned for Bosnia as a fateful first step in the militarization of German foreign policy. By then, however, Fischer and a handful of other Green dissenters had reached very different conclusions. Germany, they reasoned—especially Germany—could not abdicate responsibility for a crisis of Bosnia's magnitude. Ethnic cleansing was exactly the kind of barbarism that liberal Germans believed should never happen again in Europe. If international troops were needed to bring peace, Germany could not just spectate from the sidelines.

In the spring of 1999 Fischer backed the deployment of German bombers in a war to prevent a repeat of Srebrenica in Kosovo. A particularly bitter pill for multilateralist Germans, the intervention didn't even have the fig leaf of a UN Security Council mandate. But Germany's fascist past, Fischer argued to Green doubters, dictated that a democratic, liberal Germany do everything in its power to stop genocide in Europe, by military means when all other avenues had been exhausted, UN mandate or not. For Fischer, intervention in Kosovo constituted a legitimate last resort to defend human rights, not a rolling over to Washington and the military-industrial complex.

Europe's premier Green party remains deeply split over the proper German role in humanitarian interventions, nation-building projects and peacekeeping missions with military mandates. In places like the Balkans and Afghanistan, where Germany helps run international protectorates, leftist critics detect a strong whiff of imperialism. Others doubt Fischer's sincerity: They believe that he and Chancellor Gerhard Schröder bowed to Washington on Kosovo, and then on Afghanistan, to stay in America's good graces and ultimately save their jobs. How, they ask, can human rights violations in Kosovo justify the bombing of civilian targets while the trampling of those same rights in China, Russia or Palestine is deemed unworthy even of trade sanctions? It's a good question.

Since then, remarkably, Fischer and the red-green government have turned German engagement in world trouble spots into a defining characteristic of the so-called Berlin Republic. In 2001 Germany assumed the lead role in the NATO-run stabilization force in Macedonia, supplying most of the troops. A year later

Paul Hockenos, a journalist living in Berlin, is writing a political biography of Joschka Fischer.

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Germany went to war a second time since World War II, committing special forces to Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan. (A cluster of defiant Green and Social Democratic deputies opposed the government on both Macedonia and Afghanistan.) Today Germany has command of the NATO-led contingent in Afghanistan. By the beginning of 2002, quipped the left-wing daily *Die Tageszeitung*, "it seemed there wasn't an intervention that red-green Germany wouldn't support."

Ironically, the red-green government has expanded Germany's role and profile in the world in ways that a conservative leadership could never have dreamed of doing. For one, a conservative government would have had Greens, Social Democrats and other leftists battling it every step of the way in the Bundestag and protesting on the streets.

But more important, Fischer and Schröder represent a generation with a fundamentally different relationship to German history and German nationalism than that of conservatives. Fischer and many fellow Greens devoted their early lives to confronting the vestiges of National Socialism in West Germany's political culture and admonishing their parents' generation and the young state to do the same. In contrast, Germany's Christian Democrats often resisted this process and, though much changed from the Adenauer era, still cling to outdated conceptions of nation, state and ethnicity. During conservative rule, periodic scandals over anti-Semitic remarks and sympathetic gestures to aspects of the Third Reich kept suspicions alive that deep down, Germans sullenly resented their postwar treatment and harbored less-than-pure ambitions that might one day, should the country ever unify or regain full sovereignty, rise to the surface.

'Excuse me, I am not convinced. I am not convinced! We owe our democracy to the United States, but we must be convinced.'

Fischer's generation is above these suspicions. German history is a topic that Fischer never shies from addressing. No matter how jet-lagged, the foreign minister always has a last burst of energy to expound on the lessons of the Thirty Years' War, the Weimar Republic or the extermination of Europe's Jews. So ostensibly sincere is this generation, much of it is more reticent about the "normalization" of German activism in the wider world than is most of the wider world. Earlier this year, the German Defense Ministry announced a far-reaching restructuring of its armed forces. It stated plainly that the priority of Germany's army will not be the defense of German borders—as the Constitution stipulates—but international deployment in world conflict zones. Incredibly, not one of Germany's neighbors, not Poland or France, uttered a peep of objection. Rather, German pacifists cried foul.

Another example, perhaps even more brash: Fischer's version of a Greater Middle East Initiative poses Germany as a nonpartisan negotiator between Israel, Washington and the Arab/Muslim world, a proposal unthinkable in the not-so-distant past. So good is Germany's political credit on the world market, a permanent German seat on the Security Council, though unlikely, seems to have the backing of all its current members and the necessary two-thirds of the UN General Assembly.

It was precisely this new latitude that enabled the red-green leadership to shake another of Germany's sacred postwar pillars. When Germany refused to back the US invasion of Iraq, it altered the character of the transatlantic alliance forever: No longer would Germany act as a blindly loyal junior partner to America in international affairs.

Schröder and Fischer staked out their opposition on the Iraq issue somewhat differently. In summer 2002, German popular opinion was overwhelmingly against going to war with Iraq. Schröder, trailing badly in opinion polls, picked up the hot issue during the election campaign and played to a certain populism in order to win back supporters. He even boasted of "going our own German way" and insisted that "the existential questions of the German nation will be decided in Berlin...and nowhere else." Fischer, on the other hand, remained analytical: The alleged threat of Iraq to Germany and its allies did not warrant the use of armed force to overthrow it. Nonmilitary means of containing Saddam Hussein had not been exhausted.

This was exactly what Fischer told US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld in one of the defining moments of Fischer's tenure in office. In February 2003 at the Munich security conference, Rumsfeld was recruiting European allies for the invasion of Iraq and had presented the American intelligence that supposedly documented the link between Iraq and Al Qaeda as well as weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. Fischer, taking his turn at the lectern, at first spoke in German. But when he saw Rumsfeld in the audience, not wearing his translation headset and chatting to a colleague, he broke into English, nearly shouting at him, "Excuse me, I am not convinced. I am not convinced!" He continued in German: "We owe our democracy to the United States, but we must be convinced."

This is classic Fischer. When he is truly convinced of something, he can convince others of it—and then very effectively. He changes his mind on major issues, as he did on the Balkans, but not without considerable introspection and deliberation. He wanted Rumsfeld to know that Germany's response wasn't a knee-jerk "no!" Fischer is a committed Atlanticist at heart; he simply did not believe that Iraq posed a threat to the West, and thus he couldn't sell a war to his countrymen.

The idea that convinces Fischer most is that of a tightly bound, federal Europe. Fischer is a man of grand visions, and he tirelessly promotes that of a Europe from the Atlantic to the Urals, the Baltic to the Balkans, including Turkey, in which nations pool ever more of their sovereignty. Fischer believes that in their historic campaign to forge a united, democratic Europe, his European predecessors (including a long line of conservative German chancellors) located the silver bullet that would expunge the aggressive nationalisms that have in the past torn the continent apart. Serbia, Ukraine and Moldova should all one day belong to an EU of thirty-five or even forty member states. The very process of coaxing them along the path to Europe will democratize and stabilize these weak states. This Europe, he exhorts his Green colleagues, is the progressive challenge of the twenty-first century.

Moreover, in a globalized world, argues Fischer, Germany and France alone cannot afford the resources to tackle today's global problems—like AIDS, terrorism, climate change, failed states, sex and drug trafficking, migration and globalization itself. The

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Balkan wars prompted the Europeans to accelerate development of joint foreign and security structures, with an EU foreign affairs chief and plans for a single command center and a multinational army. At the very least, Europe should be capable of managing crises and keeping the peace in its own backyard.

So committed is Fischer to the idea, he reportedly wants the job of EU foreign minister for himself one day. Although he is not first in line for the position, his wish became distinctly more palpable when at the Brussels summit in June EU leaders agreed upon a European Constitution, which, among other innovations, stipulated the creation of a European foreign minister with a diplomatic corps. Now, all twenty-five members have to ratify the deal.

And many other key questions about Europe's foreign and security policy remain wide open. The British, for example, favor subordinating the EU's military component to NATO command; the French insist it should be wholly independent of NATO. The Germans lie somewhere in between.

Ultimately, the tighter Europe is and the more developed its foreign, security and defense capabilities, both civilian and military, the greater alternative it will pose to Pax Americana. Fischer and Schröder know this, as they know that even a unified Europe can't compete with the United States in military hardware and technology. But this was never the idea. The Germans envision a European foreign and security policy designed to facilitate conflict prevention, diplomatic initiatives and the integration of peripheral states into multilateral bodies. It is the kind of soft power that West Germany used so effectively during the cold war, and that the Bush Administration tends to shun.

This emphasis on soft power notwithstanding, the EU is also developing a military component, a flexible 60,000-man rapid reaction force, available for peacekeeping tasks but also to intervene in worldwide conflict situations. Critically, it will have its own intelligence and logistics capabilities, as well as other combat support services. This—not Green whining—will begin to alter the present "checkbook" diplomacy in which America directs and conducts wars and the Europeans clean up afterward.

Although you wouldn't know it from the US media, the new autonomous security mechanisms have taken shape and can already claim successes. In 2003 an EU stabilization force took over peacekeeping duties from NATO in Macedonia. Another EU contingent, commanded by France, intervened in Congo, at the UN's bequest, to quell internecine fighting there. And in Bosnia the EU now runs the international policing duties and could take over command of the multinational armed forces later this year. Despite fierce opposition from Washington, the International Criminal Court in The Hague is up and running today.

Joschka Fischer and Germany's red-green foreign policy can only be grasped within the context of this greater European project. Fischer is priming Germany to take an active role in this Europe of the future. It is the means for Europeans to offset or modify American dominance in world affairs. For a start, the EU can fill geopolitical vacuums, as in the Balkans or even Africa, where US interests are marginal.

Despite grumbling by some Greens, the party has of late jumped from one electoral triumph to another, increasing its share of the vote with support from outside the party's traditional ranks. In the recent EU parliamentary elections, Germany's Greens captured 12 percent of the vote. Newer Green parties in Britain, Austria and Finland also did well. In Germany, grassroots dissent hasn't hurt the party in the least. To the contrary, voters seem to approve. Fischer is Germany's keenest political tactician, and he always acts with one eye trained on the big picture. How green will European foreign policy be? Just look at Germany. ■

LETTERS
CONTINUED

(Continued From Page 2)

legitimacy elusive unless the United States can be kept at arm's length, which means reducing visible US dividends from invading Iraq. A Bush Administration bent on re-election will not look kindly on a further whittling of already much diminished dividends. Ambassador John Negroponte will "reel in" independent-minded Iraqi officials or subvert their authority.

US officials have yet to come to terms with the core dilemma in Iraq: to end the insurgency's momentum, Washington must pay a heavy toll in prestige and reputation, not to mention a domestic political penalty for a tacit admission of failure. Instead, the Bush Administration will cling to the illusion that it can engineer a satisfactory outcome in Baghdad.

Grand Ayatollah Ali Sistani, the most influential voice for Iraq's Shiite Muslim majority, offered only a conditional stamp of approval for the new government, which, he emphasizes, is un-elected. He poses key criteria to judge the government's performance: the restoration of Iraqi sovereignty and the establishment of comprehensive security. Neither condition is likely to be met. Iraqi sovereignty will mean little in the face of "military necessity."

The resistance attacks are unlikely to end or even taper off. Senior US officers persistently underestimate and seriously misread the challenge. Gen. John Abizaid, for instance, has claimed that the fighters are a force of only 5,000. In Lebanon the Israeli army faced a resistance force with a full-time cadre of fewer than 500. Other fighters were weekend mujahedeen—mechanics, optometrists, bakers—who disappeared for a few days on operation and then returned to work. That force prompted a unilateral Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon in May 2000. In Iraq, as in Lebanon, a village force of five or ten draws strength from cousins, friends and co-religionists and grows accordion-like—5,000 becomes 25,000.

Options and choices that are now visible in the rearview mirror are gone. It is not as though one missed a turn on the freeway and can double back to choose a new route. Early on the United States lost the opportunity to win a broader legitimacy for its occupation because it was determined to marginalize the UN. The United States has effectively checkmated itself in Iraq.

A century and a half ago, Florence Nightingale, the Crimean War nurse who became a leading hospital reformer, offered a wise comment: "It may seem a strange principle to enunciate as the very first requirement in a Hospital that it should do the sick no harm." In Iraq, the United States has illustrated the limits of its power, and it has spread disease rather than cured sickness. The Middle East is a much more dangerous region today than it was two years ago. AUGUSTUS RICHARD NORTON

CLARIFICATION

In Noy Thrupkaew's "Letter From Cambodia" (June 28), Hun Sen has played a key part in the government since at least 1985, when he was named prime minister by the Vietnamese occupying forces. But it was not until 1993 that democratic elections were held, under UN supervision, after which he became co–prime minister, and later prime minister.

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BOOKS & THE ARTS

The Rootless Cosmopolitan

TONY JUDT

When Edward Said died in September 2003, after a decade-long battle against leukemia, he was probably the best-known intellectual in the world. *Orientalism*, his controversial account of the appropriation of the East in modern European thought and literature, has spawned an academic subdiscipline in its own right: A quarter of a century after its first publication, it continues to generate irritation, veneration and imitation. Even if its author had done nothing else, confining himself to teaching at Columbia University in New York—where he was employed from 1963 until his death—he would still have been one of the most influential scholars of the late twentieth century.

But he did not confine himself. From 1967, and with mounting urgency and passion as the years passed, Edward Said was also an eloquent, ubiquitous commentator on the crisis in the Middle East and an advocate for the cause of the Palestinians. This moral and political engagement was not really a displacement of Said's intellectual attention—his critique of the West's failure to understand Palestinian humiliation closely echoes, after all, his reading of nineteenth-century scholarship and fiction in *Orientalism* and subsequent books (notably *Culture and Imperialism*, published in 1993). But it transformed the professor of comparative literature at Columbia into a very public intellectual, adored or execrated with equal intensity by many millions of readers.

This was an ironic fate for a man who fitted almost none of the molds to which his admirers and enemies so confidently assigned him. Edward Said lived all his life at a tangent to the various causes with which he was associated. The involuntary "spokesman" for the overwhelmingly Muslim Arabs of Palestine was an Episcopalian Christian, born in 1935 to a Baptist from Nazareth. The uncompromising critic of imperial condescension was educated in some of the last of the colonial schools that had trained the indigenous elite of the European empires; for many years he was more at ease in English and French than in Arabic and an outstanding exemplar of a Western education with which he could never fully identify.

Edward Said was the idolized hero of a generation of cultural relativists in universities from Berkeley to Bombay, for whom "Orientalism" underwrote everything from career-building exercises in "postcolonial" obscurantism ("writing the other") to denunciations of "Western Culture" in the academic curriculum. But Said himself had no time for such nonsense. Radical anti-foundationalism, the notion that everything is just a linguistic effect, struck him as shallow and "facile": human rights, as he observed on more than one occasion, are not "cultural or grammatical things, and when they are violated...they are as real as anything we can encounter."

A man of multitudes, Edward Said fitted almost none of the molds to which his admirers and enemies so confidently assigned him.

As for the popular account of his thought that has Edward Said reading Western writers as mere byproducts of colonial privilege, he was quite explicit: "I do not believe that authors are mechanistically determined by ideology, class or economic history." Indeed, when it came to the business of reading and writing, Said was an unabashedly traditional humanist, "despite the scornful dismissal of the term by sophisticated post-modern critics." If there was anything that depressed him about younger lit-

Tony Judt, director of the Remarque Institute at New York University, is working on a history of Europe since World War II for Penguin. This essay appears as the foreword to Edward Said's From Oslo to Iraq and the Road Map, *which will be published in August by Pantheon.*

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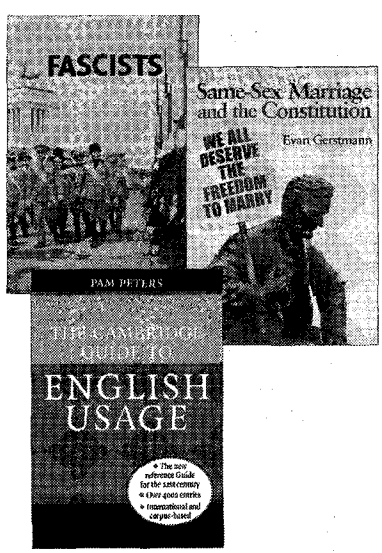

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erary scholars it was their overfamiliarity with "theory" at the expense of the art of close textual reading. Moreover, he enjoyed intellectual disagreement, seeing the toleration of dissent and even discord within the scholarly community as the necessary condition for the latter's survival—my own expressed doubts about the core thesis of *Orientalism* were no impediment to our friendship. This was a stance that many of his admirers from afar, for whom academic freedom is at best a contingent value, were at a loss to comprehend.

This same deeply felt humanistic impulse put Said at odds with another occasional tic of engaged intellectuals, the enthusiastic endorsement of violence—usually at a safe distance and always at someone else's expense. The "Professor of Terror," as his enemies were wont to characterize Said, was in fact a consistent critic of political violence in all its forms. Unlike Jean-Paul Sartre, a comparably influential intellectual for the previous generation, Said had some firsthand experience of physical force—his university office was vandalized and sacked, and both he and his family received death threats. But whereas Sartre did not hesitate to advocate political murder as both efficacious and cleansing, Said never identified with terrorism, however much he sympathized with the motives and sentiments that drove it. The weak, he wrote, should use means that render their oppressors uncomfortable—something that indiscriminate murder of civilians can never achieve.

The reason for this was not that Edward Said was placid or a pacifist, much less someone lacking in strong commitments. Notwithstanding his professional success, his passion for music (he was an accomplished pianist and a close friend and sometime collaborator of Daniel Barenboim) and his gift for friendship, he was in certain ways a deeply angry man—as the essays in this book frequently suggest. But despite his identification with the Palestinian cause and his inexhaustible efforts to promote and explain it, Said quite lacked the sort of uninterrogated affiliation with a country or an idea that allows the activist or the ideologue to subsume any means to a single end.

Instead he was, as I suggested, always at a slight tangent to his affinities. In this age of displaced persons he was not even a typical exile, since most men and women forced to leave their country in our time have a place to which they can look back (or forward): a remembered—more often misremembered—homeland that anchors the transported individual or community in time if not in space. Palestinians don't even have this. There never was a formally constituted Palestine. Palestinian identity thus lacks that conventional anterior reference.

In consequence, as Said tellingly observed just a few months before his death, "I still have not been able to understand what it means to love a country." That, of course, is the characteristic condition of the rootless cosmopolitan. It is not very comfortable or safe to be without a country to love: It can bring down upon your head the anxious hostility of those for whom such rootlessness suggests a corrosive independence of spirit. But it is liberating: The world you look out upon may not be as reassuring as the vista enjoyed by patriots and nationalists, but you see further. As Said wrote in 1993, "I have no patience with the position that 'we' should only or mainly be concerned with what is 'ours.'"

This is the authentic voice of the independent critic, speaking the truth to power...and supplying a dissenting voice in conflicts with authority: As Said wrote in the Cairo newspaper *Al-Ahram* in May 2001, "whether Israeli intellectuals have failed or not in their mission is not for us to decide. What concerns us is the shabby state of discourse and analysis in the Arab world." It is also the voice of the freestanding "New York intellectual," a species now fast approaching extinction—thanks in large measure to the same Middle Eastern conflict in which so many have opted to take up sides and identify with "us" and "ours." (To its lasting credit, Columbia University withstood considerable internal and public pressure to censure or even remove Said because of his public interventions on the Palestinians' behalf.) Edward Said, as the reader of these essays will discover, was by no means a conventional "spokesman" for one party in that conflict.

The Munich daily *Süddeutsche Zeitung* headed its obituary of Said *Der Unbequeme*—"The Uncomfortable Man." But if anything, his lasting achievement was to make *others* uncomfortable. For the Palestinians Edward Said was an underappreciated and frequently irritating Cassandra, berating their leaders for incompetence—and worse. To his critics Said was a lightning rod, attracting fear and vituperation. Implausibly, this witty and cultivated man was cast as the very devil: the corporeal incarnation of every threat—real or imagined—to Israel and Jews alike. To an American Jewish community suffused with symbols of victimhood he was a provocatively articulate remembrancer of Israel's very own victims. And by his mere

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presence here in New York, Edward Said was an ironic, cosmopolitan, *Arab* reminder of the parochialism of his critics.

The essays in this book cover the period December 2000 through March 2003. They thus take us from the end of the Oslo decade, the onset of the second intifada and the final breakdown of the "peace process," through the Israeli reoccupation of the West Bank and Gaza, the massacres of September 11, 2001, the American retaliation in Afghanistan and the long run-up to the US attack on Iraq—a distinctly turbulent and murderous twenty-eight months. During this time Said wrote copiously and urgently about the alarming state of affairs in the Middle East, contributing at least one article a month, often more, despite his worsening medical condition (to which there is no reference in these writings until August 2002, and then only a casual, passing allusion).

All but one of the pieces collected here were contributed to *Al-Ahram*. These writings are thus an opportunity for Said's Western readers to see what he had to say to an Arab audience. What they show is that Said in his final years was consistently pursuing three themes: the urgent need to tell the world (above all, Americans) the truth about Israel's treatment of the Palestinians; the parallel urgency of getting Palestinians and other Arabs to recognize and accept the reality of Israel and engage with Israelis, especially the Israeli opposition; and the duty to speak openly about the failings of Arab leadership.

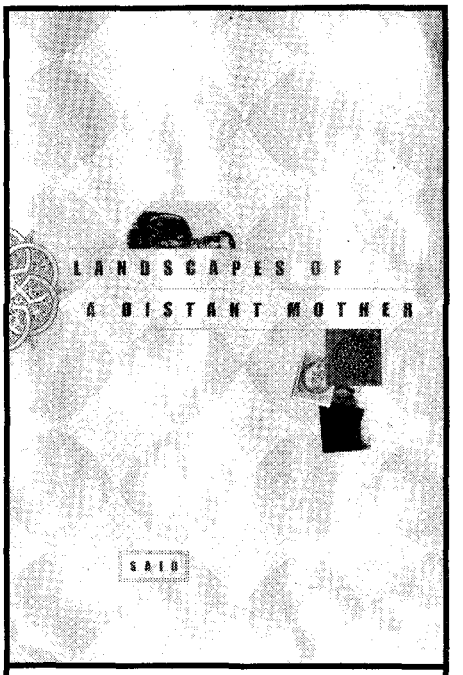
Indeed, Said was above all concerned with addressing and excoriating his fellow Arabs. It is the ruling Arab regimes, especially that of the Palestine Liberation Organization, that come in for the strongest criticism here: for their cupidity, their corruption, their malevolence and incredulity. This may seem almost unfair—it is, after all, the United States that has effective power, and Israel that was and is wreaking havoc among Said's fellow Palestinians—but he seems to have felt it important to tell the truth to and about his *own* people, rather than risk indulging the "fawning elasticity with regard to one's own side that has disfigured the history of intellectuals since time immemorial."

In the course of these essays Said recounts checklists of Israeli abuses, a grim, depressing reminder of how Ariel Sharon's government is squeezing the lifeblood from the quarantined Palestinian communities: Abuses against civilians that were once regarded as criminal acts even in wartime are now accepted behavior by a government ostensibly at peace. In Said's account these abuses are not the accidental, unfortunate byproduct of the return to power of a belligerent, irredentist general, but rather the predictable—and, in Said's case, predicted—consequence of the Palestinians' engagement in the late, unlamented "peace process" itself.

For those of us who welcomed the Oslo process and watched hopefully as it developed over the course of the 1990s, Said's disenchanted critique is depressing. But in retrospect it is difficult to deny that he got it right and we were wrong. As imagined by the Israeli peace party and welcomed by many others—Palestinians included—the Oslo process was supposed to build confidence and trust between the two sides. Contentious issues—the governance of Jerusalem, the right of return for Palestinian refugees, the problem of the Jewish settlements—would be dealt with "later," in "final-status negotiations." Meanwhile, the PLO would gain experience and credibility in the administration of autonomous Palestinian territory, and Israelis would live in peace. Eventually, two states—one Jewish, one Palestinian—would live in stable proximity, their security underwritten by the international community.

This was the premise behind the Declaration of Principles signed on the White House lawn in September 1993. But the whole thing was deeply flawed. As Said reminds us, there were not two "sides" to these negotiations. There was Israel, an established modern state with an awesome military apparatus (by some estimates the fourth-strongest in the world today), occupying land and people seized twenty-six years earlier in war. And there were the Palestinians, a dispersed, displaced, disinherited community with neither an army nor a territory of their own. There was an occupier and there were the occupied. In Said's view, the only leverage that the Palestinians had was their annoying *facticity*: They were there, they wouldn't go away and they wouldn't let the Israelis forget what they had done to them.

Having nothing to give up, the Palestinians had nothing to negotiate. To "deal" with the occupier, after all, is to surrender—or collaborate. That is why Said described the 1993 declaration as "a Palestinian Versailles" and why he resigned in anticipation from the Palestine National Council. If the Israelis needed something from the Palestinians, Said reasoned, then the things the Palestinians wanted—full sovereignty, a return to the 1967 frontiers, the right of return, a share of Jerusalem—



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should be on the table at the outset, not at some undetermined final stage. And then there was the question of Israel's "good faith."

When the initial declaration was signed in 1993 there were just 32,750 Jewish housing units in settlements on the West Bank and Gaza. By October 2001 there were 53,121—a 62 percent increase, with more to come. From 1992 to 1996, under the Labor governments of Yitzhak Rabin and Shimon Peres, the settler population of the West Bank grew by 48 percent, that of Gaza by 61 percent. To put it no more strongly, this steady Israeli takeover of Palestinian land and resources hardly conformed to the spirit of Oslo. (Article 31 of the Oslo II agreement, signed in 1995, explicitly states that "neither side shall initiate or take any step that will change the status of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip pending the outcome of the permanent status negotiations.")

Meanwhile, even as the PLO was authorized to administer the remaining Palestinian districts, Israel was constructing a network of "Jewish" roads crisscrossing those same regions and giving settlers and other Israelis exclusive access to far-flung housing units (and scarce aquifers) protected by permanent military installations. (This had the paradoxical consequence of segregating Jews and Arabs even as they became more economically interdependent: Israelis relying on cheap Palestinian labor, Palestinians dependent on Israel for jobs and access to markets.) The whole exercise was driven forward partly by an anachronistic Israeli conflation of land with security; partly by a post-'67 irredentist eschatology (with the Old Testament invoked as a sort of real estate contract with a partisan God); and partly by longstanding Zionist enthusiasm for territorial enlargement as an end in itself. From the Palestinian point of view the effect was to make the "Oslo process" an agonizing exercise in slow strangulation, with Gaza in particular transformed into a virtual prison under Palestinian warders, the Israeli army standing guard just outside the perimeter fence.

And then, in the year 2000, came the long-postponed "permanent status negotiations" themselves: first at Camp David and then, desperately, at Taba in the Sinai. Said, of course, had no time for the conventional American view that President Clinton and Prime Minister Ehud Barak virtually gave away the farm and that even then the ungrateful PLO and its leader, Yasir Arafat, refused the gift. This is not because Said had any sympathy for Arafat but because the original Camp David offer was—as Tanya Reinhart described it in the Israeli daily *Yediot Ahronot* on July 8, 2001—so palpably a fraud. The Palestinians were to get 50 percent of their own land, chopped into separate and often noncontiguous cantons; Israel was to annex 10 percent of the land; and the remaining 40 percent was to be left "undecided"—but under indefinite Israeli rule.

Six months later, at Taba, the Palestinians were offered an improved territorial deal, certainly the best they could ever have hoped for from an Israeli government. But the resulting Palestinian state would still have been utterly dependent on Israel and vulnerable to its whims; the grievances of Palestinian refugees were never fully addressed; and the contentious issues of sovereignty over Jerusalem remained unresolved. Indeed, even the last-minute Israeli concessions were still encumbered with what Said nicely terms "conditions and qualifications and entailments (like one of the endlessly deferred and physically unobtainable estates in a Jane Austen novel)."

'Much more important than having a state is the kind of state it is,' wrote Said, a scathing critic of Arafat and his PLO apparatchiks.

Meanwhile Barak had continued to expand the population of the very settlements that his own negotiators recognized as a major impediment to agreement. Even if the PLO leaders had wanted to sell the Taba discussions to their constituents, they might have had difficulty doing so. The second intifada, which burst out following Sharon's meticulously timed visit to the Temple Mount, has been a disaster for the Palestinians, but it was born out of years—the Oslo years—of frustration and humiliation.

Taba, and especially Camp David, were the bitter fruits of Oslo, and in Edward Said's view the PLO's error in engaging the process in the first place was well illustrated by its inevitable rejection of the outcome, retroactively discrediting the whole strategy of negotiations. In an *Al-Ahram* article of June 2002, Said is scathingly unforgiving of the PLO apparatchiks and their leader, who for a while did rather well out of the power they exercised as the "Vichyite" governors of occupied Palestine under Israel's benign oversight. They were and are "a byword for brutality, autocracy and unimaginable corruption."

In other contributions to the same newspaper, Said writes that Arafat and his circle "have made our general situation worse, much worse." "Palestinians (and, by extension, the other Arabs) have been traduced and hopelessly misled by their leaders," who have neither high principles nor practical, pragmatic strategies. "It has been years since Arafat represented his people, their sufferings and cause, and like his other Arab counterparts, he hangs on like a much-too-ripe fruit without real purpose or position."

What, then, is to be done? If the Palestinian leadership is corrupt and incompetent; if Israeli governments won't even keep faith with their own stated commitments, much less the desires of their interlocutors; if there is so much fear and loathing on all sides, how should the two-state solution be implemented, now that Israelis, Palestinians and the international community—even the Americans—all at last accept it in principle? Here, once again, Said was at odds with almost everyone.

In 1980, when he first publicly pressed for a two-state solution, Said was attacked and abused from all sides, not least by Arafat's own Fatah movement. Then, in 1988, the Palestine National Council belatedly conceded that the best possible outcome was indeed the division of Palestine into two states—one Israeli, one Palestinian—echoing Said's insistence that there was no alternative to reciprocal territorial self-determination for Jews and Arabs alike. But as the years went by, with half of the occupied territories expropriated; with the Palestinian community a shambles and the putative Palestinian territory a blighted landscape of isolated enclaves, flattened olive groves and ruined houses, where humiliated adults were fast losing the initiative to angry, alienated adolescents, Said drew the increasingly irresistible conclusion.

Israel was never going to quit the West Bank, at least not in any way that would leave it in a coherent, governable condition. What kind of a state could the West Bank and Gaza ever constitute? Who but a criminal mafia would ever *want* to take on the task of "governing" it? The "Palestine" of PLO imaginings was a fantasy—and a rather unappealing one at that. For good or ill, there was only going to be one real state in the lands of historic Palestine: Israel. This was not utopia; it was merely hard-headed pragmatism shorn of illusion. The genuinely realistic approach lay in accepting this fact and thinking seriously about how to make the best of it: "Much more important than having a state is the kind of state it is." For the last decade of

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his life Edward Said was an unbending advocate of a single, secular state for Israelis and Palestinians.

What grounds did Edward Said have for his faith in a single-state solution, a nonexclusive, secular, democratic alternative to the present impasse? In the first place, the status quo is awful and getting worse: two peoples, each sustained by its exclusive victim narrative, competing indefinitely across the dead bodies of their children for the same tiny piece of land. One of them is an armed state, the other a stateless people, but otherwise they are depressingly similar: What, after all, is the Palestinian national story if not a reproachful mirror to Zionism, a tale of expulsion, diaspora, resurrection and return? There is no way to divide the disputed "homeland" to mutual satisfaction and benefit. Little good can come of two such statelets, mutually resentful, each with an influential domestic constituency committed to the destruction and absorption of its neighbor.

In the second place, something fundamental has changed in the Palestinian condition. For four decades millions of Palestinian Arabs—in Israel, in the occupied territories, in refugee camps across the Arab world and in exile everywhere—had been all but invisible. Their very existence was long denied by Israeli politicians; their memory of expulsion had been removed from the official record and passed unmentioned in history books; the record of their homes, their villages and their land was expunged from the very soil itself. That, as Said noted, was why he kept on telling the same story: "There seems to be nothing in the world which sustains the story; unless you go on telling it, it will just drop and disappear." And yet "it is very hard to espouse for five decades, a continually losing cause." It was as though Palestinians had no existence except when someone committed a terrorist atrocity—at which point that is *all* they were, their provenance uncertain, their violence inexplicable.

That is why the "right of return" had so central a place in all Palestinian demands—not because any serious person supposed that Israel could take "back" millions of refugees and their descendants, but from the deeply felt need for *acknowledgment*: a recognition that the initial expulsion took place, that a primordial wrong was committed. That is what so annoyed Said about Oslo: It seemed to excuse or forgive the Israelis for the occupation and everything else. But, as he wrote in *Al-Ahram* in March 2002, "Israel cannot be excused and allowed to walk away from the table with not even a *rhetorical demand* [my emphasis] that it needs to atone for what it did." Attention must be paid.

But attention, of course, *is* now being paid. An overwhelming majority of world opinion outside the United States sees the Palestinian tragedy today much as the Palestinians themselves see it. They are the natives of Israel, an indigenous community excluded from nationhood in its own homeland: dispossessed and expelled, illegally expropriated, confined to "bantustans," denied many fundamental rights and exposed on a daily basis to injustice and violence. Today there is no longer the slightest pretense by well-informed Israelis that the Arabs left in 1948 of their own free will or at the behest of foreign despots, as we were once taught. Benny Morris, one of the leading Israeli scholars on the subject, recently reminded readers of the Israeli daily newspaper *Ha'aretz* that Israeli soldiers did not merely expel Palestinians in 1948–49, in an early, incomplete attempt at ethnic cleansing; they committed war crimes along the way, including the rape and murder of women and children.

As the years went by and the occupation deepened, Said became an unbending advocate of a single, secular state for Arabs and Jews.

Of course, Morris notoriously sees nothing wrong in this record—he treats it as the collateral damage that accompanies state-building. ("I don't think that the expulsions of 1948 were war crimes," he told *Ha'aretz*. "You can't make an omelet without breaking eggs.") But this brings us to the third ground for thinking Said may be right about the chances for a single state. Just as the Palestinian cause has begun to find favor in public opinion, and is gaining the moral upper hand, so Israel's international standing has precipitately collapsed. For many years the insuperable problem for Palestinians was that they were being expelled, colonized, occupied and generally mistreated not by French *colons* or Dutch Afrikaners but, in Said's words, by the Jewish citizens of Israel, "remnants of the Nazi Holocaust with a tragic history of genocide and persecution."

The victim of victims is in an impossible situation—not made any better, as Said pointed out, by the Arab propensity to squeeze out from under the shadow of the Holocaust by minimizing or even denying it. But when it comes to mistreating others, even victims don't get a free pass forever. The charge that Poles often persecuted Jews before, during and after World War II can no longer be satisfactorily deflected by invoking Hitler's 3 million Polish victims. Mutatis mutandis, the same now applies to Israel. Until the military victory of 1967, and even for some years afterward, the dominant international image of Israel was the one presented by its left Zionist founders and their many admirers in Europe and elsewhere: a courageous little country surrounded by enemies, where the desert had been made to bloom and the indigenous population airbrushed from the picture.

Following the invasion of Lebanon, and with gathering intensity since the first intifada of the late 1980s, the public impression of Israel has steadily darkened. Today it presents a ghastly image: a place where sneering 18-year-olds with M-16s taunt helpless old men ("security measures"); where bulldozers regularly flatten whole apartment blocks ("rooting out terrorists"); where helicopters fire rockets into residential streets ("targeted killings"); where subsidized settlers frolic in grass-fringed swimming pools, oblivious of Arab children a few meters away who fester and rot in the worst slums on the planet; and where retired generals and Cabinet ministers speak openly of bottling up the Palestinians "like drugged roaches in a bottle" (former Israeli Chief of Staff Rafael Eytan) and cleansing the land of its Arab cancer (former Housing Minister Effi Eitam).

Israel is utterly dependent on the United States for money, arms and diplomatic support. One or two states share common enemies with Israel; a handful of countries buy its weapons; a few others are its de facto accomplices in ignoring international treaties and secretly manufacturing nuclear weapons. But outside Washington, Israel has no *friends*—at the United Nations it cannot even count on the support of America's staunchest allies. Despite the political and diplomatic incompetence of the PLO (well documented in Said's writings); despite the manifest shortcomings of the Arab world at large ("lingering outside the main march of humanity"); despite Israel's own sophisticated efforts to publicize its case, the Jewish state today is widely regarded as a—*the*—leading threat to world peace. After thirty-seven years of military occupation, Israel has gained nothing in security. It has lost everything in domestic civility and international respectability, and it has forfeited the moral high ground forever.

The newfound acknowledgment of the Palestinians' claims and the steady dis-

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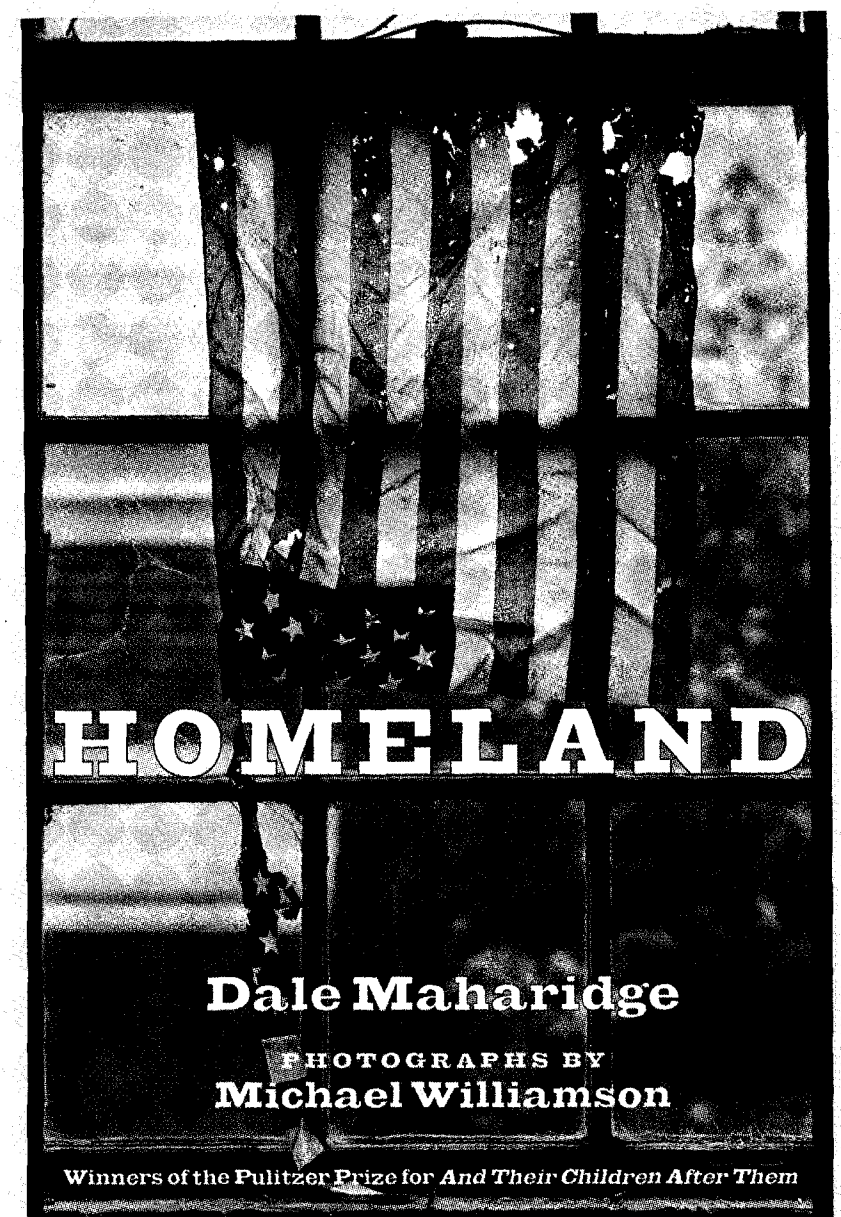

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crediting of the Zionist project (not least among many profoundly troubled Israelis) might seem to make it harder rather than easier to envisage Jews and Arabs living harmoniously in a single state. And just as a minority of Palestinians may always resent their Jewish neighbors, there is a risk that some Israelis will never, as it were, forgive the Palestinians for what the Israelis have done to them. But as Said understood, the Palestinians' aggrieved sense of neglect and the Israelis' insistence on the moral rectitude of their case were twin impediments to a resolution of their common dilemma. Neither side could "see" the other. As Orwell observed in his "Notes on Nationalism," "If one harbours anywhere in one's mind a nationalistic loyalty or hatred, certain facts, although in a sense known to be true, are inadmissible."

Today, in spite of everything, there is actually a better appreciation by some people on both sides of where—quite literally—the other is coming from. This, I think, arises from a growing awareness that Jews and Arabs occupy the same space and will continue to do so for the foreseeable future. Their fates are hopelessly entangled. Fence or no fence, the territory now ruled by Israel can only be "cleansed" of its Arab (or its Jewish) residents by an act of force that the international community could not countenance. As Said notes, "historic Palestine" is now a lost cause—but so, for the same reasons, is "historic Israel." Somehow or other, a single institutional entity capable of accommodating and respecting both communities will have to emerge, though when and in what form is still obscure.

The real impediment to new thinking in the Middle East, in Edward Said's view, was not Arafat, or Sharon, or even the suicide bombers or the ultras of the settlements. It was the United States. The one place where official Israeli propaganda has succeeded beyond measure, and where Palestinian propaganda has utterly failed, is in America. As Said observed in a May 2002 column for *Al-Ahram*, American Jews (rather like Arab politicians) live in "extraordinary self-isolation in fantasy and myth." Many Israelis are terribly aware of what occupation of the West Bank and Gaza has done to their own society (if somewhat less sensitive to its effect on others). In the words of Haim Guri, an Israeli poet who served in the 1948 war, "Rule over another nation corrupts and distorts Israel's qualities, tears the nation apart, and shatters society." But most Americans, including virtually every American politician, have no sense of any of this.

That is why Said insists in these essays upon the need for Palestinians to bring their case to the American public rather than just, as he puts it, imploring the American President to "give" them a state. American public opinion matters, and Said despaired of the uninformed anti-Americanism of Arab intellectuals and students: "It is not acceptable to sit in Beirut or Cairo meeting halls and denounce American imperialism (or Zionist colonialism for that matter) without a whit of understanding that these are complex societies not always truly represented by their governments' stupid or cruel policies." But as an American he was frustrated above all at his *own* country's political myopia: Only America can break the murderous deadlock in the Middle East, but "what the U.S. refuses to see clearly it can hardly hope to remedy."

Whether the United States will awaken to its responsibilities and opportunities remains unclear. It will certainly not do so unless we engage a debate about Israel and the Palestinians that many people would prefer to avoid, even at the cost of isolating America—with Israel—from the rest of the world. In order to be effective, this debate has to happen in America itself, and it must be conducted by Americans. That is why Edward Said was so singularly important. Over three decades, virtually single-handedly, he wedged open a conversation in America about Israel, Palestine and the Palestinians. In so doing he performed an inestimable public service at considerable personal risk. His death opens a yawning void in American public life. He is irreplaceable. ■

Requiem for a Dream

MATT STEINGLASS

AMERICAN TABOO: A Murder in the Peace Corps. By Philip Weiss. HarperCollins. 369 pp. $25.95.

In a cluster of beach bungalows in Ghana in December 2000, my wife and I encountered the Peace Corps dream. The dream appeared in the form of a 24-year-old volunteer from Wisconsin, wiry, tan, with dark, shaggy locks of hair that fell to his eyes, riding a black BMW motorcycle. He had just spent two years in a desert village in Niger, and he was traveling with his girlfriend, a delicious Norwegian blonde, who was doing a fellowship in anthropology at Legon University in Accra. They had extremely vocal sex all night, and spent the day sipping mango juice on the beach. Later that week we ran into them in an Irish theme pub in Accra, and when a Ghanaian drinking partner mentioned he spoke Hausa, the trading language of the Sahel, the kid from Wisconsin put him to shame with his superior fluency. The Norwegian girl gazed at her Peace Corps man with a look that could have melted stone.

Philip Weiss's *American Taboo: A Murder in the Peace Corps* is a book about the end of the Peace Corps dream, but the dream Weiss has in mind is a somewhat different one. Weiss is talking about the original Peace Corps dream, which John F. Kennedy first articulated in an impromptu late-night bull session with University of Michigan students in October 1960. "How many of you are willing to spend ten years in Africa or Latin America or Asia working for the United States and working for freedom?" Kennedy asked. "How many of you who are going to be doctors are willing to spend your days in Ghana? On your willingness to do that, I think, will depend the answer to whether we as a free society can compete."

One has to call up the mindset of the Sputnik era to understand why Kennedy might have thought this, why he failed to realize that the Soviet inclinations of Nkrumah's Ghana would be vanquished less by Hausa-speaking volunteers than by Irish theme pubs. In any case, Weiss's book deals with the betrayal of one aspect of Kennedy's vision: the pledge that Peace Corps volunteers would not only live in the same conditions as the people they served but be subject to their host country's laws, without special treatment. *American Taboo* tells the story of Deborah Gardner, a volunteer in the Pacific island nation of Tonga who was murdered by a fellow volunteer in 1976. The Peace Corps intervened to hush up the crime and prevent the Tongan courts from convicting her murderer—allowing him, in the end, to escape scot-free.

As a tale of sexual violence, Gardner's

Matt Steinglass, who writes for the Boston Globe, Metropolis *and other publications, lives in Hanoi.*

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story is sadly routine, apart from its exotic setting. She was a 22-year-old beauty from small-town Washington State when she signed up for the Peace Corps in late 1975. Strong-willed and uninhibited, she adapted well to the poverty and isolation that make Peace Corps life such a psychological challenge. She had more trouble with the restrictive gender codes of Tongan society, whose conservative Christianity overlays extensive traditional social and sexual taboos. Gardner wanted to ride her bike around alone at night and go skinny-dipping in the harbor. Meanwhile, this being the mid-1970s, she was carrying on a series of sometimes overlapping love affairs with male volunteers.

One volunteer Gardner considered a friend, but had no romantic interest in, was Dennis Priven, a sarcastic and withdrawn chemistry teacher from Brooklyn. Priven gradually became obsessed with Gardner, and by the autumn of 1976 he was stalking her. He applied to stay an extra year in Tonga, although, by all accounts, he hated the country. In early October Gardner spent the night with Priven's best friend, a funky San Francisco art student named Emile Hons, and this seems to have pushed Priven over the edge. On October 14, 1976, Priven burst into Gardner's house and stabbed her more than twenty times with a large fishing knife. She died in the local hospital a few hours later. Priven turned himself in, but without making a confession.

As soon as it became known that another volunteer was the likely killer, the Peace Corps stepped in to protect him. The Tonga country director, an overwrought and underqualified political appointee named Mary George, was advised by State Department lawyers to arrange counsel for Priven, then step aside. Instead, she repeatedly asked the local police chief to drop the charges, and convinced Peace Corps to fly in a defense-witness psychiatrist from Hawaii, who obligingly testified that Priven was schizophrenic. The Peace Corps hired Priven the best lawyer in Tonga. While the outmatched prosecutor had multiple witnesses to the struggle between Priven and Gardner, he was unprepared for the insanity defense, which had never been mounted in Tonga.

After Priven was found not guilty by reason of insanity, the State Department negotiated his return to the United States, on condition that he be committed to an institution. But American diplomats misstated their authority to the Tongans. In fact, Priven could not be held in the United States unless an American psychiatrist found him dangerously insane. The head of psychiatry at DC's Sibley Hospital instead found the supposedly schizophrenic Priven to be perfectly sane. And so Deborah Gardner's killer walked. The Peace Corps, which had managed to keep the trial out of the news, left Gardner's parents with the impression that Priven was in a mental institution. They didn't learn the truth until Weiss contacted them while researching the book.

Cooperating with Weiss was clearly a wrenching experience for Gardner's family and friends, and some of them questioned his motives. The reader will, too, partly because Weiss devotes a lot of time to them, and his self-analysis rings somewhat false. At times, he focuses on his sympathy for Gardner, but this is a bit unseemly: There's something Laura Palmer-ish about a middle-aged man's unsolicited concern for an attractive dead girl. Elsewhere, he relates conversations with friends of Gardner who begged him to "tell the untold story." This smacks of self-justification. It should be enough for Weiss that Gardner's murder makes a smashing tale; the relatives might reproach him for profiting from it, but readers wouldn't.

This isn't the only area where Weiss tends to overwrite. The physical setting of Tonga is striking enough, but Weiss torques it up: "a fish fence stood out against the pale horizon like so many sharp vertical lines in india ink." This would be fine except that Weiss is writing about an event in 1976, where he was not present. He makes the same mistake with characters' feelings; his use of the indirect style can be maddeningly histrionic:

> Vic's breath choked in his throat. It was like someone had kicked him in the chest, still he didn't cry, he wouldn't let that happen, but he covered his eyes and thought of the bad way he and Deb had left off.

The reader can't help but wonder how Weiss knows that it felt like a kick in the chest. What kind of an interview led to this passage? "How did it feel when you heard?" "Philip, it felt like someone kicked me in the chest." "Did you cry?" Weiss even makes a disastrous attempt at circularity, repeating the book's first sentence as its last one. The only reason a reader would recognize the device is that the line is so incomprehensible as a closer that one looks back to the beginning to figure out what's going on.

On the bright side, Weiss has done a spectacular job of researching the case. He spent years interviewing dozens of former volunteers who were in Tonga with Gardner. He cites documents—State Department telexes, volunteers' letters home, court records—to great effect, and his assess-

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ments of the internal politics of the Peace Corps and the Tongan government are persuasive. His reconstruction of Tonga in 1976, and his account of the crime, are exquisitely detailed. And his character portraits are rich, if often overdone. The most striking is Mary George, an extravagantly dressed ex-model who was appointed country director by virtue of her relationship with a Ford Administration bigwig, and threw herself into Priven's defense after experiencing a religious vision of Deb Gardner's "real" killer—a Tongan, of course.

Finally, Weiss found Dennis Priven, living in a nondescript apartment in Sheepshead Bay and running the computer department of the Social Security Administration's Brooklyn office. The book's finale, an account of the afternoon Weiss spent at Dean & DeLuca talking to Deborah Gardner's goofy and disturbingly personable killer, has all the makings of a truly great scene—Orson Welles in *The Third Man*, as remade by Todd Solondz.

And yet it doesn't quite work. Perhaps this is because Weiss consistently fails in his efforts to impart larger significance to his story. He wants to make Gardner's death emblematic of the death of a certain Peace Corps ideal. "Peace Corps was another bureaucracy, fighting for its existence on Capitol Hill," he writes; officials had hushed up the case and worked to free Gardner's murderer in order to "preserve their own careers, to preserve the American presence in the South Pacific, to preserve the churchly image of the Peace Corps."

But this description doesn't fit the case. The Peace Corps's attempts to keep the case quiet certainly suited its organizational interests. But its efforts to free Dennis Priven were driven more by the caprices of Mary George, who seems to have had a poor understanding of the organization, and who was pushed out some months after the trial largely because of her actions on behalf of Priven. Weiss alleges that the attempt to get Priven acquitted and shipped out of Tonga was motivated by a desire to preserve the Peace Corps program there. But in Weiss's own description, the Peace Corps's efforts to defend Priven generated enormous anger on the part of both Tongan authorities and average Tongans, not to mention other volunteers. How did this help preserve the program?

If there is something that the Peace Corps's efforts to free Dennis Priven emblematizes, it would have to be the intensity of Americans' phobic aversion to being tried by any courts other than American ones. The Pentagon's refusal to allow American soldiers to be tried either in

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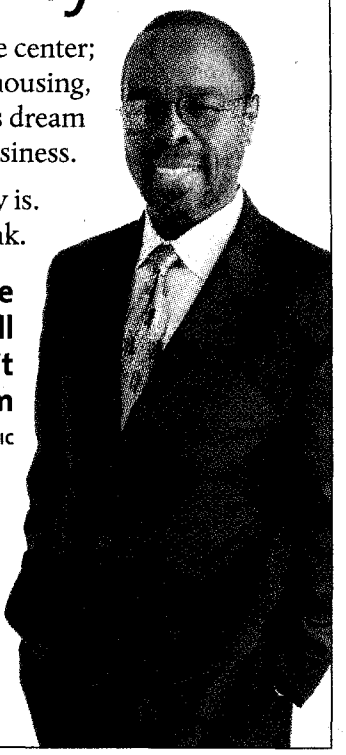

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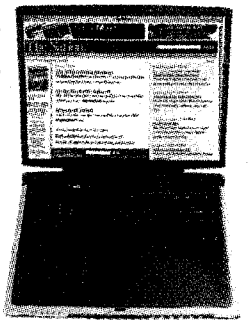

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international or in foreign national courts is notorious, but the same attitude is shared by Americans of all stripes. What American parents would consent to having their Peace Corps–volunteer child tried in some Third World court? The Gardner case is the most striking illustration of Americans' hostility to foreign justice, precisely because the most internationalist of American governmental organizations went to extraordinary lengths to get Dennis Priven out—even though it meant helping a volunteer's murderer escape from justice, and damaging its own Tonga program in the process.

As for the death of the Peace Corps dream, the Peace Corps of today may not be quite the entity John Kennedy had in mind on that night in Michigan in 1960, but that doesn't have much to do with Deborah Gardner's murder. Kennedy envisioned an organization of well-trained volunteers carrying out intensive, 1960s-style development programs. The Peace Corps has never been that. If the Peace Corps were evaluated on the same indices as professional development organizations and NGOs, it would do poorly. The American public still seems to believe Peace Corps volunteers are flown in to rescue countries in humanitarian crises, like the Gwyneth Paltrow character in *Shallow Hal*. In fact, of course, Peace Corps volunteers don't get flown in when things fall apart; they get evacuated. The United States has a professional governmental development organization. It's called USAID. The Peace Corps is something else.

What the Peace Corps is—the reason it's a great program, the reason President Bush (of all people!) is right to have given it substantial budget increases in the past few years—is the best, if not the only, bridge between American youth and the developing world. Peace Corps volunteers may or may not help impoverished villages eradicate Guinea worms or get more girls into school. But they learn to live like the locals, speak like the locals, eat like the locals and shit like the locals, and they constitute the best possible public-relations campaign for American goodwill in the developing world. When they come home, they are among the few Americans who have any clue how most of the world lives. I'm not sure how much that Hausa-speaking Adonis from Wisconsin did for Niger in his two years there—if, in fact, anything can be done for Niger. But his version of the Peace Corps dream is far from dead, and that dream is vital, because it not only gets American kids interested in the poor of the world; it makes it seem cool. ■

ART

Body and Soul

ARTHUR C. DANTO

AMEDEO MODIGLIANI

In the 1960s, the New York Jewish Museum became the unlikely leading venue for contemporary avant-garde art in America. It was there, in the former Warburg mansion on upper Fifth Avenue, that enthusiasts for innovative art were able to study, in some depth, the second generation of the New York School, as well as those artists who had already gone well beyond it—Jasper Johns, Robert Rauschenberg, George Segal, Philip Guston, Ad Reinhardt and others. In 1963 Alan Solomon put together the exhibition "Toward a New Abstraction," with work by, among others, Ellsworth Kelly and Leon Polk Smith, marked by the hard-edged clarity of its forms and colors, and the use of canvases shaped in nontraditional ways. The following year the museum gave most New Yorkers their first understanding of Minimalist painting and sculpture when Kynaston McShine organized the epochal exhibition "Primary Structures." It would have been difficult to tell from what was on view in the other museums in the city that New York was the most exciting center of artistic innovation in the world, and there can be little question that the extraordinary popularity and prestige of the Jewish Museum's shows put pressure on its peers to rethink their responsibilities to contemporary art.

At the same time, however, the success of those shows created considerable tensions between the museum and its parent institution, the Jewish Theological Seminary, not to mention the more conservative elements in New York's Jewish community. The museum was originally intended to house and study ritual and ceremonial objects the seminary had acquired. It had never been intended as a hot spot for non-Jewish artists to display their work for a cosmopolitan audience. My own view was that nothing could be more Jewish than supporting advanced art, and that a European tradition of Jewish patronage, disrupted by fascism, had been taken up by American collectors like Vera List, who had become powers on the museum's board of directors. In the end, conservatism triumphed, and the Jewish Museum disappeared from the "What's Going on in New York" pages of magazines. Unless you had a passion for Jewish artifacts and their historical significance, there was no reason to set foot in what for a decade had been the improbable site of radical artistic exploration.

In recent years the Jewish Museum has been pursuing a program that again appeals to a wider and more urbane audience, while remaining faithful to the mission of promoting an awareness of Jewish culture. It has mounted shows of Jewish artists whose work is of compelling interest to anyone concerned with art, whether or not they take a further interest in the ethnic or religious identity of those who made it. As one part of this agenda, it has paid particular attention to Jewish artists drawn to Paris in the first decades of the twentieth century, when it was the beacon for those with advanced artistic ambitions—Marc Chagall, Jacques Lipchitz, Sonia Delaunay, Chaim Soutine and now Amedeo Modigliani, figures that any museum anywhere would take pride in presenting. As a Jewish venue, however, the museum feels bound by responsibilities other museums need not share. It cannot rest satisfied with letting the work stand on its artistic merits alone. It must make an effort to explain in what special ways the Jewishness of the artists contributes to the significance of the art. It is thus under the kind of obligation that museums with dedicated constituencies generally feel bound by—to explain, for example, how a peculiarly feminine sensibility inflects the art in a museum devoted to work made by women, or how the blackness of the artists in museums restricted to black artists contributes to the interest and importance of their art.

There are many sound reasons—political, moral, educational and psychological—for the existence of what we might call identity art museums: museums whose visitors are, in a sense, split between those whose identity is an important reason for going to see an exhibit, and those who go primarily for the art irrespective of the

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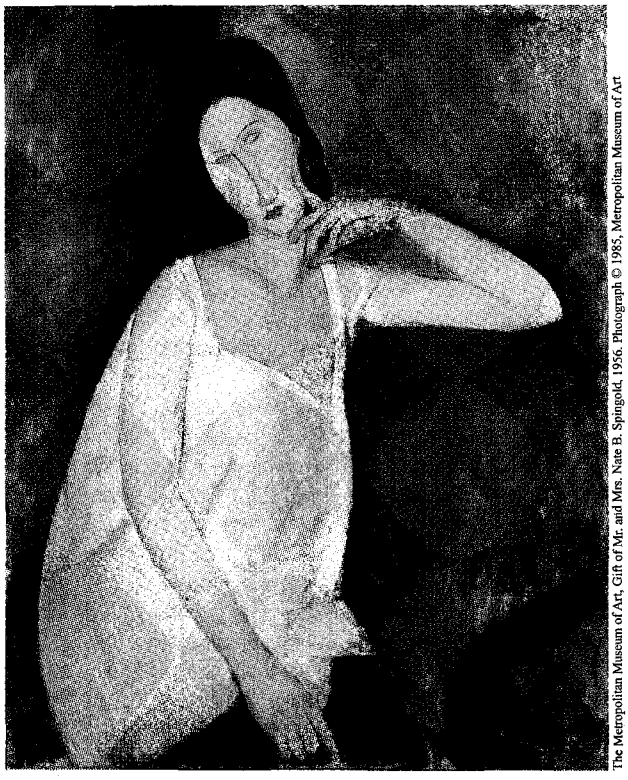
artists' race, nationality or gender. As a rule the artists don't need such museums. It is, rather, the other way around. There is currently on view at New York's Metropolitan Museum a superb painting of chess players by Sofonisba Anguissola, in a show of artists from Lombardy. Anguissola was one of the wonders of her age: Vasari visited Cremona to see her work, and Michelangelo held her in highest esteem. *The Chess Players*, almost certainly her masterpiece, is difficult for most of us to see, since it is located in Poznan, Poland. I went down to Washington especially to write about the wonderful show of her work a few years ago, which, for reasons of museum politics, was shown in the National Museum of Women in the Arts. But it would have been no less at home in the National Gallery or, for that matter, the Metropolitan Museum. The Jewish Museum had an incentive to put together the superb and very moving show of Modigliani—a Sephardic Jew born in Livorno in 1884—now on view in its second-floor galleries (until September 19, after which it travels to the Art Gallery of Ontario and the Phillips Collection in Washington). But because of Modigliani's stature, and his nearly unparalleled popularity, lines at least as long as those at the Jewish Museum would form wherever such a show were held today.

As a Sephardic Jew myself, I might, if I were given to such allegiances, take satisfaction that one of our own had achieved such eminence as an artist. But I find it extremely difficult to see how Modigliani's Sephardic identity has any bearing on his art. As a person and an artist, Modigliani personified the values and aesthetics of the School of Paris in the years before World War I. He immediately grasped that a new era had opened in art, and that to achieve the artistic greatness to which he aspired, he had to find his way as a Modernist. He very quickly began appropriating non-European stylistic devices that had become marks of Modernism—from Africa, Oceania and elsewhere. He saw Picasso's *Demoiselles d'Avignon* in the artist's studio in 1907, and soon began carving heads with elongated faces, long thin noses, slitty eyes and tiny mouths. Modigliani's style had certain affinities to German Expressionist art, not as a matter of direct influence but of an interest in non-European forms shared by advanced artists throughout Europe. The impact on Modigliani of the aesthetic strategies of *l'art negre* defined his entire generation. He would almost certainly never have become the Modernist he was had he remained in Italy. So it is difficult to swallow the argument of the show's curator that "far from being rooted in aesthetics and the history of art, his art and portraiture originate elsewhere"—namely in the political and religious reality of a Jew in Modigliani's Italy, and especially "his Sephardic understanding of the indelibility of his Jewishness, regardless of acculturation."



The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Nate B. Spingold, 1956. Photograph © 1985, Metropolitan Museum of Art

***Jeanne Hébuterne* (1919)**

How does that "understanding" show up in his art? "Mirroring his own experience of racial anonymity, Modigliani's abstracting pictorial terms confer on his sitters an enigmatic quality." At best, this would explain the "enigmatic quality" of Modigliani's sitters. In fact, the portraits are so transparent that if one of them had an enigmatic quality, it would be because he or she was an enigmatic person. The curator goes on: "What are we to make of an artist whose scrutiny of the individual gradually becomes so stylized as to effect a succession of seemingly indifferent faces echoed in the impassive expression of his stone caryatids?" My response to this is: What are we to make of a curator who sees Modigliani's portraits as "a succession of seemingly indifferent faces"?

The mystery of Modigliani is that each of his portraits embodies his own unmistakable style while at the same time showing a face with an expression of its own and a personality one is certain is precisely that of the sitter before him. The early sculptured heads admittedly have a kind of hieratic sameness, but it may have been this that caused him to give up sculpture in 1915—not merely because of his exceedingly fragile health, as is sometimes argued, or because the stone he needed was difficult to come by during the war, but because he realized that sculpture was the wrong medium for an artist whose true gifts coincided with his profound interest in the individual soul that each human face reveals. The paintings that captivate the throngs waiting outside to see them were all done in the last five years of his tragically short life, when portraying those who meant the most to him—artists, lovers, patrons—must have had an urgency that accounts for their poignant intensity.

What calls for explanation is that Modigliani's signature work is almost entirely restricted to portraits—even the spectacularly erotic and profoundly moving suite of nudes he painted late in his life are individuated portraits of women looked at through longing eyes. If one did not know they were models, hired by one of his patrons so that Modigliani might paint something salable—his show of nudes at the Berthe Weill Gallery in December 1917 was his only one-person exhibition in a commercial gallery—one would suppose they must be of women with whom he had made love. They are among the most erotic nudes in history, the heat and softness of their bodies made magically visual. Each is an incarnation in visual terms of tenderness and desire, and each, at the same time, is an individual woman, passionately aware. Matisse's *Blue Nude*, even his *Pink Nude*, is an exercise in expressive abstraction. We are conscious of them as paintings, and only secondarily as women. Only rarely with Picasso, as in some of his portraits of Marie Therèse Walther, does the sexed being of a woman become palpable. But Modigliani loses himself in the women he paints, accenting their nipples and pubic hair. Small wonder the police closed the show down!

It is often observed that Modigliani remained independent of the two powerful styles that defined the Paris art world before World War I—Cubism and Fauvism. That is because he had no interest in reducing objects to geometrical elements, with Picasso and Braque, or in submerging visual reality to arbitrary colors in the interest of abstract

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design, as with Matisse and Dérain. His subject was the human being, body *and* soul. The drive to put that meaning onto canvas entailed that the only format available to him as an artist was the intimate portrait. The freedom with which Cubism and Fauvism broke up the human form gave him a lexicon of notations with which to render features in a way that borders on caricature. It made it possible for him to reinvent the face before him, depicting expressively, through curves and angles, the way the subject felt to him. That made him a modern artist, but free of Modernist dogmas. Characteristically, an oval head is tilted on a long neck, with the body quickly brushed in. He did a few landscapes, and no still lifes that I know of. What interest could he have had in mere things and places?

Like Tosca, Modigliani lived for art and for love—*Vissi d'arte, vissi d'amore.* He had a knack for living likenesses, but an interest only in people for whom he had a bond of feeling. This guaranteed a life of poverty, for he could hardly charge fees when his subjects were primarily chums and sweethearts, themselves as poor as he was. So he lived on handouts, petty loans, small charities. A man that impractical was hardly likely to live a prudent life. He formed terrible habits and became a legendary drunk and pothead. His friends called him "Modi," which sounds close enough to *maudit*—"cursed"—to summon up the image of the outcast poet portrayed in Baudelaire's *Fleurs de Mal*, were it not for the affection with which it must have been pronounced. As he was blazingly handsome, there was always someone happy to take care of him. Luckily for us, he was too driven by a belief in his ultimate greatness to settle for the passive life of a spoiled beauty.

Modigliani not only underwent a true academic training in Florence, Venice, Rome and Livorno but continued to believe in the virtues of traditional painting. Unlike his compatriots the Futurists, he was in no hurry to jettison the past. It was for the same reason he held himself apart from the Cubists and the Fauvists. He meant to be a Modernist, but he wanted at the same time to achieve work that had the weight, the clarity, even the beauty of traditional Italian art. Though indisputably modern, particularly in their use of African forms, the great portraits of the last five years of Modigliani's life have the transparency of a Renaissance portrait. But this is to look at him too much from an art-historical perspective. I would not want someone to take away the idea that what made him an important artist was a sort of fusion of Siena and the Congo.

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What made Modigliani important altogether transcends the question of influence, though I am unsure that I am able to explain it. I found it extremely moving to walk past those paintings of slender, luminous beings with their blank eyes and pursed lips, an experience I can only compare to looking at old photographs of people I don't know but whom somebody once knew, who had a real existence—a life—in a certain place and time. There is that extraordinary patina of their having been some particular person. Which is not to say that the images are in any sense photographic. We see them through the medium of Modigliani's consciousness, which is dense with effects entirely his own. The image is the intersection of two consciousnesses—the artist's and the subject's—and some of the feelings of both are transmitted in ways it is impossible to explain, but that make us feel we are in the presence not primarily of a painting but of a person. I think of them as having the power of icons, in which the subjects—traditionally Jesus or Mary or one of the saints—made themselves mystically present. It was not necessary for the icon to resemble its subject. What mattered was that the subject was somehow present, and could be engaged with. I was overwhelmed by the reality of these presences—of Moise Kisling, or Max Jacob, or Jean Cocteau. And I could not think of another artist who achieved such an illusion, unless Vermeer or perhaps Egon Schiele, although by very different means.

I think Modigliani addresses each of his viewers in these terms. The most important thing about him is what also explains his popularity. What those who line up to see a show of his work know is really all that needs to be known, the rest being art history and gossip. What they know is that they have fallen in love with a tawny nude, or a beautiful long-necked woman with eyes like blue almonds and a mouth that looks as if it were kissed onto the canvas. They don't come because they have studied Modigliani in art history courses, since he is no longer part of the great canonical narrative of Modernism. His absence from the art history textbooks must have something to do with the fact that there has not been a show of his work here for more than fifty years. But I imagine that reproductions of his paintings continue to sell very well. So in the end I am grateful that Modigliani's Sephardism gave the Jewish Museum a pretext to give us this wonderful show. Don't let the crowds keep you away! And if you come up with a better account of his power, I'd like to know about it. I am sure it has to do with light, love and beauty. But my analytical powers carry me only so far. ■

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SOUTHERN VERMONT *NATION* DISCUSSION GROUP is forming, centered in Wilmington and the surrounding towns of Marlboro, Halifax, Whitingham, Readsboro, Woodford and West Dover, but all interested persons from the Brattleboro, Greenfield and Bennington areas invited to join. For information please call Bob Silverman, (802) 464-5149.

NORTH JERSEY *NATION* DISCUSSION GROUP: Coordinator is Trudy Anschuetz, phone (973) 746-4135 e-mail TGOBLUE1@aol.com.

BRANDON, FL, *NATION* DISCUSSION GROUP FORMING. Contact Mary, (813) 689-8859.

PLEASANTON CA, Fremont, San Ramon, Danville, Dublin, Livermore *Nation* discussion group now forming. Call John @ (925) 462-6815 or e-mail supervalue10@aol.com.

BREVARD, NC, *NATION* **DISCUSSION GROUP FORMING.** E-mail Jim @ JKeenen@aol.com or Don at GAIA@citcom.net.

THE *NATION* DISCUSSION GROUP of the Inland Northwest is forming in the Cheney/Spokane area of eastern Washington. For information contact Gil Murray. Tel: (509) 235-1574; e-mail murraygil@aol.com.

ATTENTION BENELUX *NATION* READERS! Want your own *Nation* discussion group? Group to meet in Hasselt (Limburg), Belgium. For further information e-mail associates@thenation.com or write The Nation Associates, *The Nation*, 33 Irving Place, New York, NY 10003, USA.

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PORTLAND/VANCOUVER *NATION* DISCUSSION GROUP meets every second Sunday afternoon of the month. For more information, contact Mark Stephan at (503) 240-4965.

SOUTH YORK COUNTY, ME, *NATION* DISCUSSION GROUP is forming. For further information please contact Herb. Call (207) 646-5431, e-mail pala@maine.rr.com.

PITTSBURGH *NATION* DISCUSSION GROUP REFORMING under new direction. Please contact us again. Contact (412) 486-4791, or pghnationgroup@yahoo.com.

WESTERLY, RI, *NATION* DISCUSSION GROUP FORMING. Call Patricia at (401) 596-9341 or e-mail fineco@riconnect.com.

DENTON, TX, *NATION* DISCUSSION GROUP is forming. Contact John at (940) 498-4485 for more information.

MANCHESTER, CT, *NATION* DISCUSSION GROUP forming. Call Gary at (860) 498-4486 after 6:30 PM. Planning to meet on the last Sunday of every month.

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ST. LOUIS AREA *NATION* DISCUSSION GROUP NOW forming. Please contact Mary at (314) 352-5155.

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PUZZLE NO. 2949

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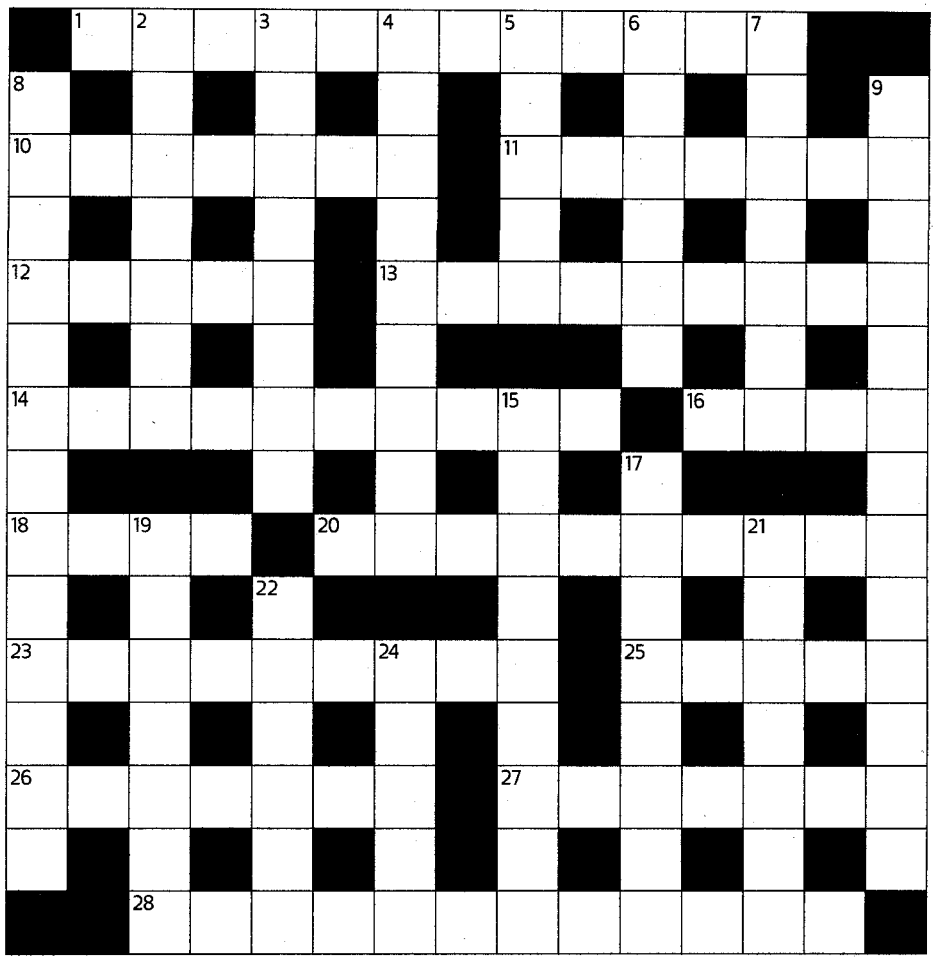

ACROSS

1 Having quit the army, and not working? (3,2,7)

10 What George was doing with the cherry tree—and by the way some people are driving a cab. (7)

11 What you expect the lightbulb to do when you have trouble with the gas inside the city. (7)

12 The active are sometimes said to be full of them by so-called heads. (5)

13 Located with the snoot, as some say? Exactly so! (2,3,4)

14 One moved from his place of birth, probably, to make amends for having a bad traitor inside. (10)

16 Omit what comes between a hop and a jump, since that's what some call the captain! (4)

18 This hat should go well with a sort of pike. (4)

20 Wishing evil for the masculine varmint, by part of the Bible. (10)

23 Kicked off the nest, having a purpose with the Duce to have trouble with it. (6,3)

25 The way a horse might move around a thing that could tell your fortune, being somewhat of a card. (5)

26 The sort of camera I have to show the country at its best. (7)

27 Like the Artful Dodger, bring back a way to preserve things when I have shortly finished it. (7)

28 He wasn't really angry—it was something like mercury that made him seem like he'd flipped his lid. (3,3,6)

DOWN

2 Our Sam isn't quite finished with the snake, but has to let go this way. (7)

3 Laziness might be considered rather fancy this way, but it's too different on your head. (8)

4 An omen, alternatively in a kind of address for a Latin Lady. (9)

5 Equivalent to 13? Correct! (5)

6 A gem is cut differently, but you get representations of such. (6)

7 Suggests a different kind of collar on such as Humpty Dumpty—yellow rather than white. (3,4)

8 Does this happen at the crack of dawn? (3,5,2,3)

9 With British dessert, a little work comes up at upside-down extremities, digitally speaking—as players of them know. (5,8)

15 To get a late century, it went the wrong way. (9)

17 In a way, shorten a sort of bridge—at least promise to get the job done! (8)

19 The harbor has a tangled net, according to predictions. (7)

21 One might put this "up to snuff"—implying some hesitation at the river. (7)

22 Tom typically is in great shape around the Spanish. (6)

24 You can see the city from a half-mile away! (5)

PUZZLED? No more cross words. If you don't see why "Lures" are "Ground Rules" send for those of Mr. Lewis to: Puzzled, *The Nation*, 33 Irving Place, New York, NY 10003, or access our website at www.thenation.com/print/hints.

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 2948

W	O	R	K	O	F	F	S	T	E	A	M			
	R		E		L		A		N		A		O	
U	N	R	E	Q	U	I	T	E	D		L	O	V	E
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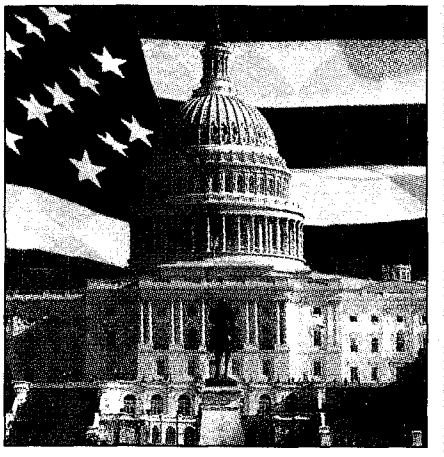

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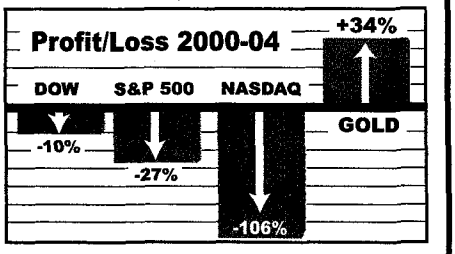

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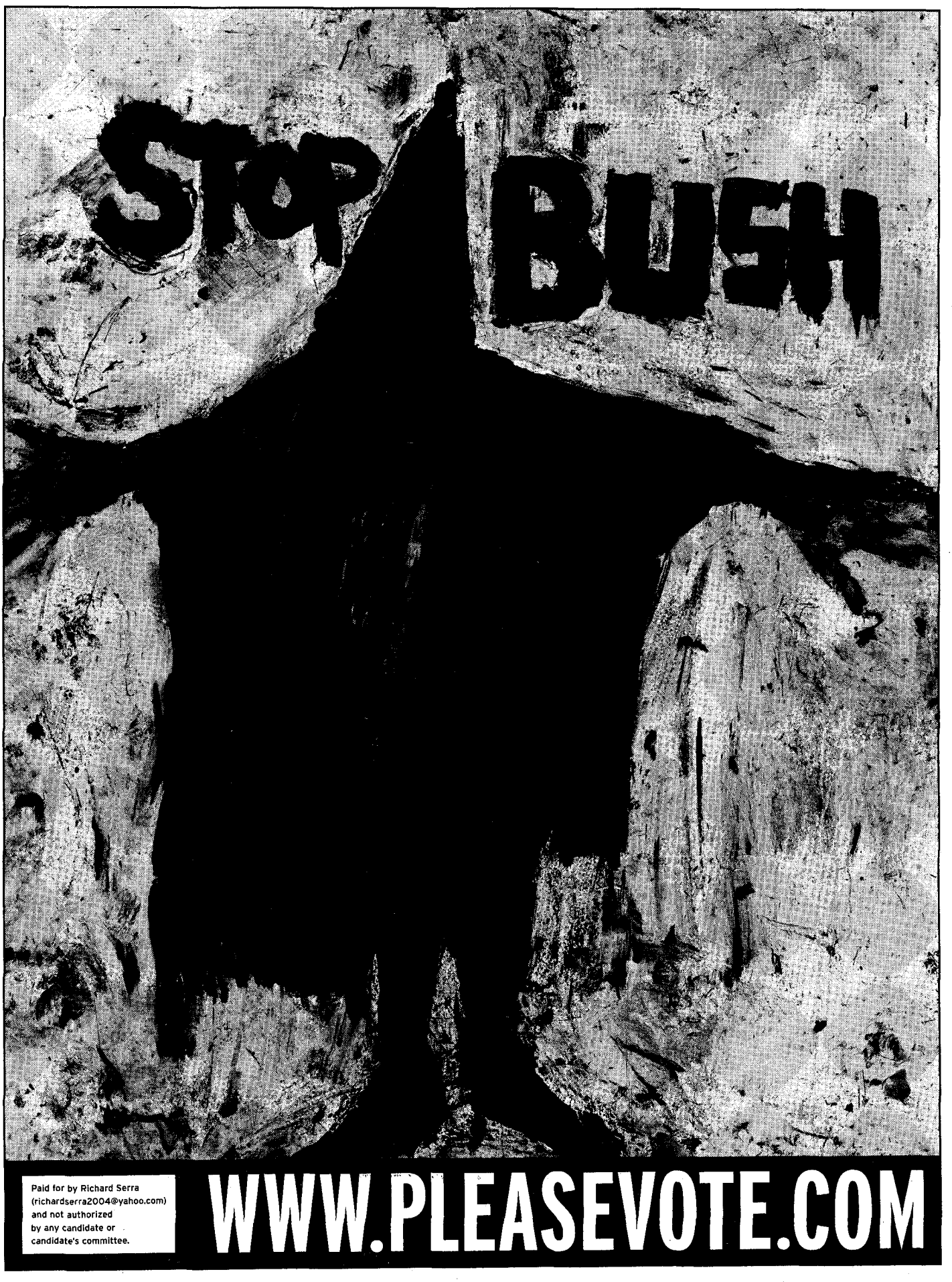

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